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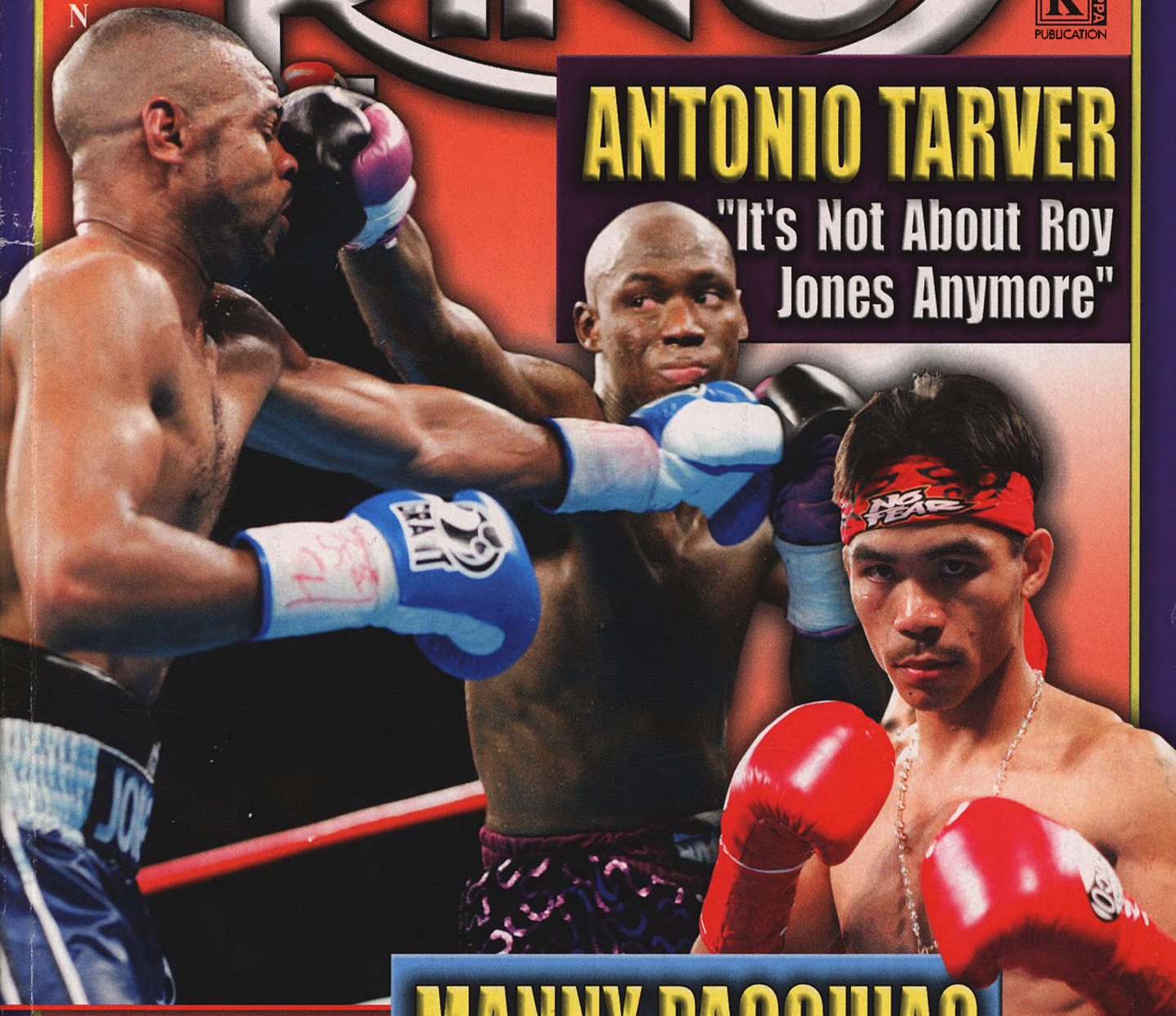

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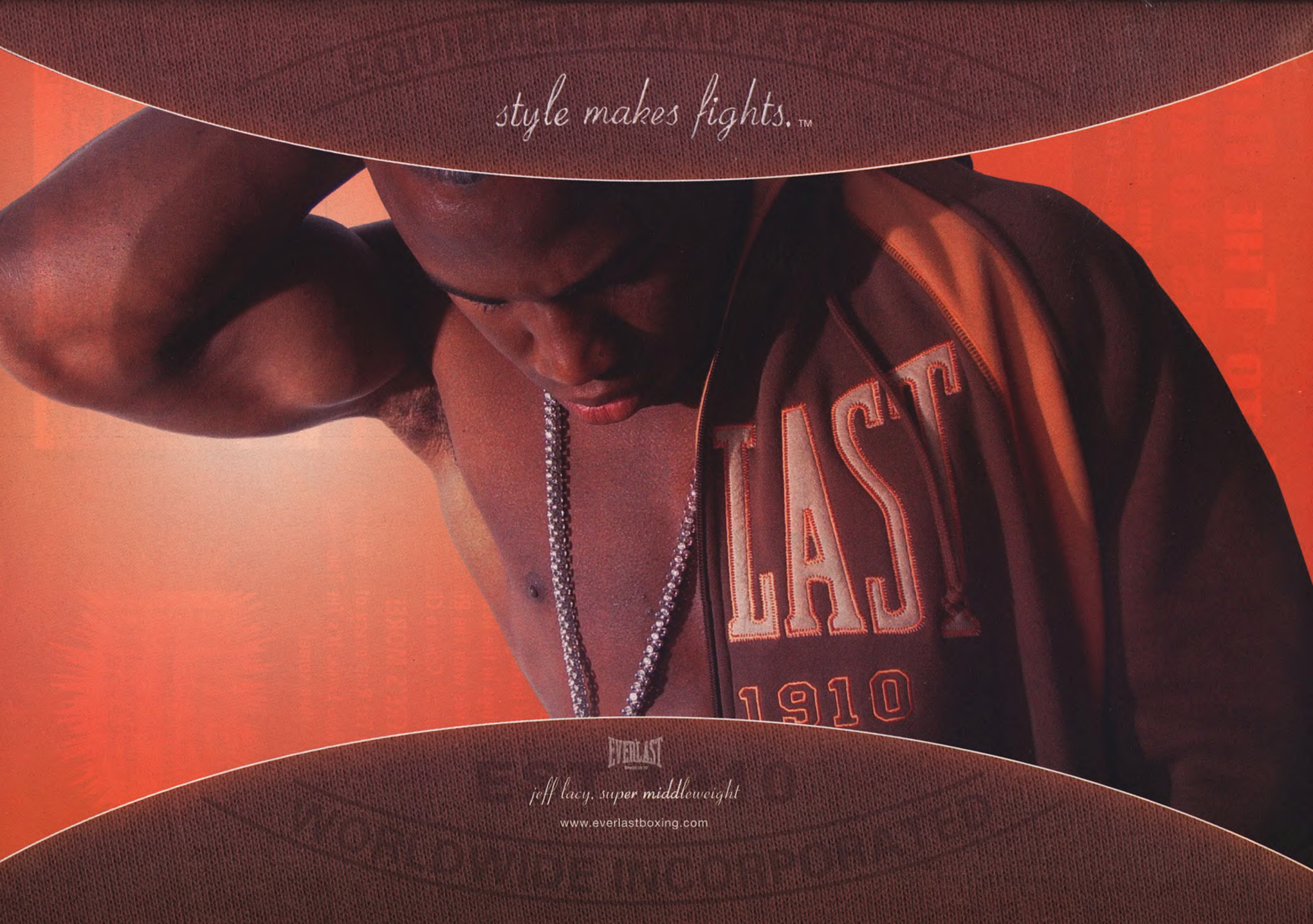
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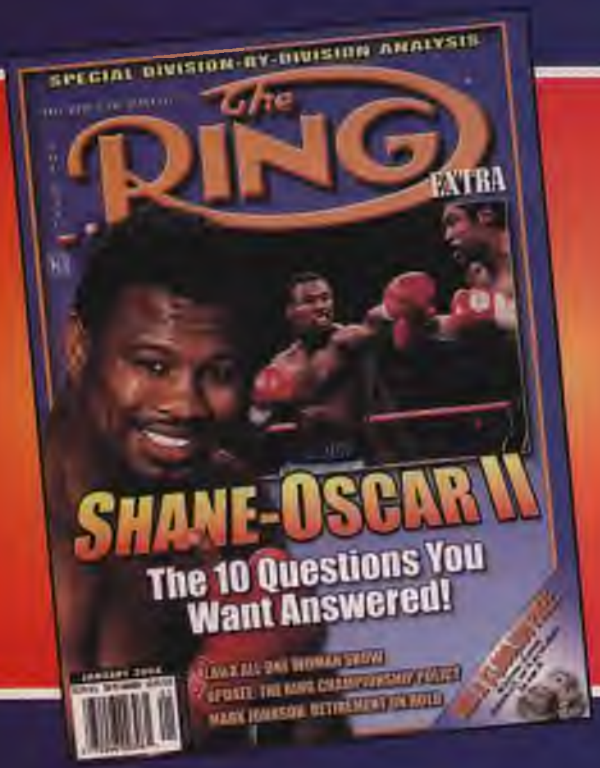

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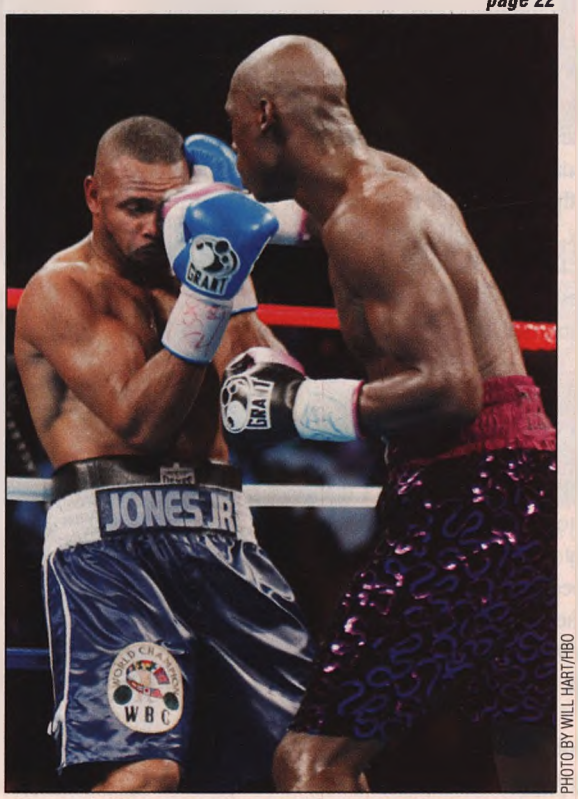

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RINGSIDE

As 2003 draws to a close, gloom and doom seems to permeate news of the Sweet Science:

•ESPN will no longer pay promoters licensing fees, putting the future of the *Friday Night Fights* in peril.

•Showtime has slashed its boxing budget.

•Virtually every time he's interviewed, promoter Bob Arum predicts the imminent death of the sport that has made him a millionaire.

•Lou DiBella, who recently severed relationships with many of the fighters in his promotional stable, calls for an emergency summit meeting among promoters.

•Many within the industry, consumed with self-interest, refuse to grab the lifeline THE RING has thrown to them in the form of its new championship policy.

•The mainstream media continues to either ignore or ridicule the sport.

I could go on, but I don't want readers to open a vein, at least not until they finish reading this column.

I'm not going to BS you. Things could be better, a helluva lot better. But I'm nowhere near ready to throw in the towel.

Boxing has amazing staying power, and there's no better proof of that than the magazine you're holding in your hands. During the 82 years of THE RING's existence, the sport has seen countless ups and downs, but the magazine has survived for one reason and one reason only—boxing has always weathered the bad times and come fighting back.

So why do so many people think boxing is now headed for a total meltdown?

Well, it's only human nature for people to think that their hard times are the hardest of all-time. Beyond that is the inability of most folks to take a step backward and look at the big picture. Instead, they focus on the immediate, and, when it comes to those directly involved in the industry, on their own particular problems.

Yes, boxing is struggling right now, but it's not going to disappear. In or out of the ring, the secret of survival has always been the ability to change and adapt.

When boxing switched from bare knuckles to gloves, old-timers said it would kill the sport. There were similar forecasts of calamity when television arrived on the scene. Ditto when network TV abandoned the game. And from the birth of modern boxing in the early-18th century until today, a seemingly endless series of scandals have prompted innumerable crapehangers to shovel enough dirt on the supposed corpse to build a mountain higher than Everest.

But guess what. Boxing hung in there, modified itself to suit a new set of circumstances, and moved on.

Those who think boxing can't do it again are handicapped by their lack of vision. History says they're wrong, and for what it's worth, so do I.

***

As this is the last "Ringside" editorial I'll write this year, I'd like to take this opportunity thank all of the loyal contributors who have helped make THE RING a magazine the sport can be proud of. Nobody gets rich working as a freelance boxing writer or photographer, but that hasn't stopped some of the best talent in the business from toiling long and hard on behalf of "The Bible Of Boxing." They do it because they love the sport and know that their work will be appreciated by those who feel the same way they do—our equally loyal readers.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 83, No. 4 **April 2004**

THE RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

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Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

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A Moment in Time . . . McCallum, Shulberg, Foreman, Locche, and Cokes proudly display their Hall of Fame rings.

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A Collector's Dream . . . Boxing memorabilia for fans. The world's only all-boxing show draws collectors from throughout the world.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Chip . . . Gerry Cooney (l) chips onto 18th green while Sir Henry Cooper (r) is enroute to next tee.

COCKTAIL PARTY

Stars . . . Boxers and fans enjoy VIP cocktail party reception.

MUSEUM

Ricardo Lopez points to his boxing shoes on display.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Christy Martin laces up her gloves and Bernard Hopkins hits the speed bag.

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Having Fun. . . Frank Bruno and Bert Sugar team up for a ringside lecture.

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ROUND ONE

FRIDAY NIGHT FIGHTS: FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL

The future of ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights* was in jeopardy following the network's late-November decision to stop paying licensing fees to promoters. Network sources confirm that things started to go wrong for ESPN2 boxing long before this decision was announced.

FNF debuted in October 1998 and was originally a success. The ratings, while not stupendous, were good enough that the corporate brass decided to expand, and in the summer of 2001, ESPN added the *Tuesday Night Fights* to its lineup. Network brass, however, chose not increase the budget, so while $65,000 had been allotted per show for licensing fees, now only $50,000 was available. In other words, ESPN wanted more fights for the same amount of money.

With fewer dollars to be paid to fight promoters, the quality of matches began to suffer, and consequentially the ratings started to drop. At this point, ESPN started to bump *FNF* from its regular time slot, which resulted in consumer confusion and the further erosion of the ratings.

But the smaller budget wasn't the only factor involved. Instead of buying specific fights, dates were handed out carte blanche to various promoters, who frequently filled them with matches that were advantageous to them, but not necessarily to the viewers or *FNF*. Some promoters, our sources say, even went as far as selling their dates to other promoters. Together with corporate greed, the dubious allotment of licensing fees has come perilously close to killing *FNF* as we know it.

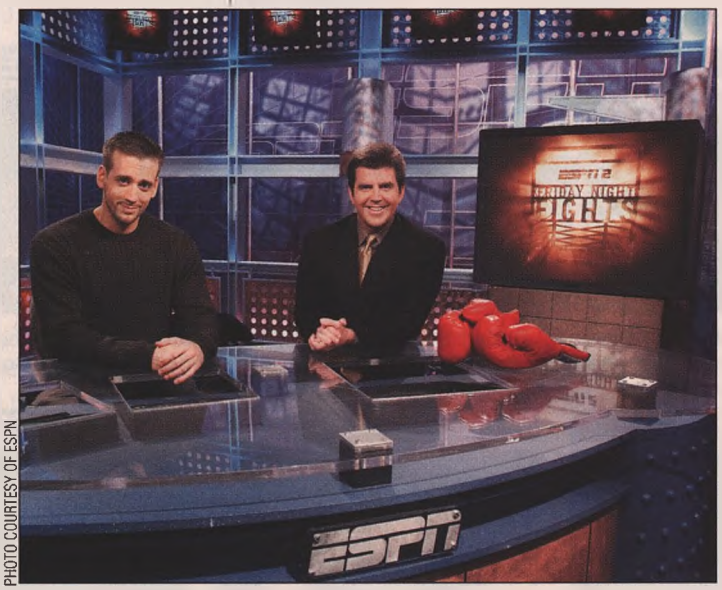


PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN

Kellerman (with co-host Brian Kenny) is struggling to put a positive spin on things

As this is being written in early-December, the future of the *FNF* is uncertain. The network said it will continue to broadcast fights, providing the promoters supply their own sponsors. Whether or not this plan will result in regular programming remains problematical. But if there's a silver lining to the whole situation, it just might be that the new system could force promoters to make better fights.

"The upside is that promoters will no longer be subsidized, meaning that they now actually have to *promote*," said Max Kellerman, *Friday Night Fights*' studio co-host. "Promoters will no longer be able to get away with being just middlemen who sign people to contracts. It's going to force promoters to actually promote. They are actually going to have to sell tickets to their fights. What a concept!

"The most precious commodity that ESPN has to offer boxing promoters is not the licensing fee; the most precious commodity is the airtime. ESPN is a brand synonymous with sports in this country. Here's 2½ hours of prime time on Friday night, which is by far the most valuable thing ESPN has to offer boxing. Promoters still have access to airtime. Now it's up to them to do their job."

Kellerman makes a very valid point. But any way you slice it, the loss of approximately $3-million a year from the boxing revenue stream is going to hurt regardless of how things develop in the coming months.

—Nigel Collins

A SPECTRUM OF POSSIBILITIES?

The last golden era of Philadelphia boxing took place in the 1970s, back when bellbottoms, Cuban heels, and long hair were in style—along with big-time boxing at the Spectrum. Between January '73 and February '80, there were a total of 73 boxing shows promoted by the Spectrum, featuring some of the most famous fighters in the game.

The director of the Spectrum Boxing Department was J Russell Peltz, a former sportswriter who ran the program out of a closet-sized office in the bowels of the building. Today, more than two decades after the Spectrum scrapped its boxing department, Peltz is back at the venue (now called the Wachovia Spectrum) trying to rekindle the flame that was extinguished by the advent of casino gambling in nearby Atlantic City.

As far as Spectrum boxing is concerned, the more things change the more they seem to stay the same:

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

Stewart and Robinson drew a modest crowd to Peltz' Spectrum return

On January 15, 1973, junior lightweight contender Sammy Goss headlined the first card of the Spectrum series and stopped faded veteran Raul Cruz. The paid attendance was 3,535. Peltz' inaugural attempt to revive Spectrum boxing, which took place on November 11, 2003, saw junior welter Mike Stewart stop faded veteran Ivan Robinson in the main event. There were 3,411 fans in the building.

A few days after the first Spectrum card, *Philadelphia Inquirer* boxing writer Gene Courtney wrote a generally positive review, but noted, "The only thing missing was a good crowd."

"I was hoping for more, but I'm satisfied. I think it will improve as we go along," said Peltz in '73. He echoed the same sentiments following the recent comeback card: "The crowd is not what we hoped for, but I'm not discouraged. We can only grow from here."

The first time around, Peltz was right. The program gradually picked up steam, with perennial Philly favorite Bennie Briscoe leading the way. With Briscoe headlining, the second show drew 5,012 fans, generating the first profits for the fledgling program.

Thanks to a bevy of local stars, which included Briscoe, Goss, Cyclone Hart, Willie Monroe, Bobby Watts, Tyrone Everett, Jeff Chandler, and Matthew Saad Muhammad, the program grew until it was second only to the Great Western Forum among U.S. boxing venues. During its glory years ('76 through '78) the Spectrum cards were averaging between 7,500 and 9,500 fans per show, peaking in November '76 when a crowd of 16,019 turned out to see Alfredo Escalera retain the WBC junior lightweight title with a scandalous decision over local hero Everett. Briscoe also did big numbers, drawing 14,930 against Marvin Hagler (who lost twice at the Spectrum, though not to Briscoe) and 10,465 and 11,438 for his two bouts with Hart.

In retrospect, it's interesting to note how wrong Courtney was when he bemoaned the "terrible lack of local talent" available the first time the Spectrum got into the boxing business. Compared to the pugs on the most recent card, the Philly fighters of the '70s were all Hall of Famers. So perhaps this writer's view of the current crop is just as jaundiced as Courtney's was in '73. Even so, it's virtually impossible to envision Peltz duplicating the success of the '70s with fighters like Stewart, Anthony Thompson, Miguel Figueroa, Harry Yorgey, and John Poore, all of whom fought and won on the comeback card.

Still, Peltz, who no longer sports the Afro he wore in '73, remains as upbeat as he was back then. "We'll be back in the middle to the end of March," said the promoter. "Just as soon as all the snow is over."

If only he could bring a primetime Briscoe with him.

—Nigel Collins

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
11-7-03	David Lopez KO 7 Lonnie Bradley	ESPN2	sm	C-	B-	C
Let's be happy it wasn't Epifanio Mendoza in there with Bradley						
11-7-03	Ivan Valle KO 3 Angel Vazquez	ESPN2	f	C+	B	C+
Vazquez the biggest disappointment since Vito Antuofermo's bone-filing surgery						
11-8-03	Jermain Taylor KO 7 Rogelio Martinez	PPV	sm	B-	C	C
Taylor doing it the old-fashioned way: too damned slowly						
11-8-03	**Winky Wright W 12 Angel Hernandez**	**PPV**	**IBF jm**	**B+**	**C-**	**C-**
Wright was a lot more fun when no one had seen him fight; he's even boring when he's getting tagged						
11-8-03	**Roy Jones W 12 Antonio Tarver**	**PPV**	**World lh**	**A+**	**B+**	**B**
Note to Tarver: The last two rounds count						
11-14-03	Paulie Ayala W 10 Edel Ruiz	Telef	f	B	C	C
We're glad to see all that time off didn't tighten up Ayala's defense any—what fun would that be?						
11-15-03	**Manny Pacquaio KO 11 Marco Antonio Barrera**	**HBO**	**World f**	**A+**	**A**	**B+**
Barrera should have taken out the plate and belted Pacquaio with it; hey, nothing else was working						
11-21-03	Armando Santa Cruz KO 9 Arturo Morua	ESPN2	l	C-	B-	C+
Hey, ESPN, thanks for yet another delayed start; way to commit to your boxing programming!						
11-21-03	Juan Valenzuela KO 8 Ernie Zavala	ESPN2	jw	C+	B	C+
Valenzuela sure showboats a lot for a guy who's one loss away from fighting for a plate of shrimp and a medium soda						
11-22-03	Rogelio Ramirez W 6 Octavio Lara	PPV	l	C	C-	B-
If Emanuel Steward isn't slipping as a trainer, then he's at least slipping as a judge of talent						
11-22-03	Jose Navarro W 12 Reynaldo Hurtado	PPV	jb	B-	B	C+
We didn't think it was possible, but Hurtado made Navarro look like a stubby junior bantamweight						
11-22-03	**Javier Jauregui KO 11 Leavander Johnson**	**PPV**	**IBF l**	**A-**	**A-**	**B+**
A fight like this would have been great on ESPN2 a few years ago						
11-22-03	**Oscar Larios KO 10 Napapol Kiatisakchokchai**	**PPV**	**WBC jf**	**A**	**B-**	**B-**
Napapol, the alphabet called; they're running out of consonants						
11-22-03	Juan Diaz KO 6 Joel Perez	Show	l	C+	C+	B-
Whether or not you think he's the goods, young Diaz brings it every round						
11-22-03	Panchito Bojado W 12 Juan Carlos Rubio	Show	jw	B-	B+	C
A fine performance by Bojado, even if we like him better when he's bleeding and winging hooks						
11-22-03	Rocky Juarez W 12 Hector Velazquez	Show	f	B	B	C-
Yes, it was ugly, but it did more for Juarez than did those one-punch knockouts						
11-28-03	Pedro Ortega KO 9 Eric Regan	Telef	m	C+	C-	B-
Upset! Ortega survives shaky start to drill prospect down the stretch; let's see how Regan handles it						

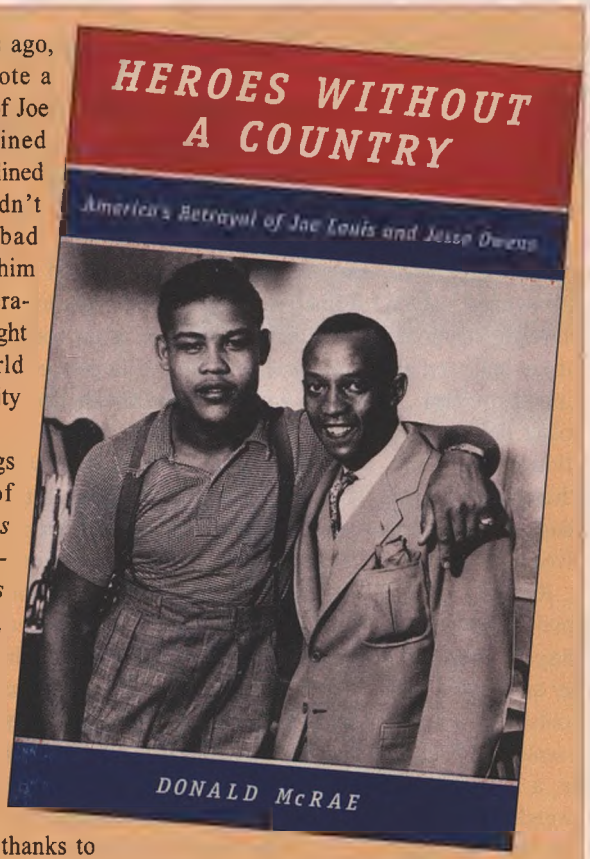
Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World/Alphabet title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Telef—Telefutura; Telem—Telemundo; HBO L—HBO Latino

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



Thirtysomething years ago, when Barney Nagler wrote a book chronicling the fall of Joe Louis down a cocaine-lined rabbit hole, my father declined to read it because he didn't want to hear anything bad about the boxer who, to him and so many of his generation, infused the heavyweight championship of the world with more honor and dignity than any other titleholder.

I had similar misgivings prompted by the title of Donald McRae's *Heroes Without A Country: America's Betrayal Of Joe Louis And Jesse Owens* (Ecco, 389 pages, hardcover, $25.95), a book inspired by McRae's discovery of a minute news item concerning a 1938 faux footrace between Louis and Owens, Joe's friend and, thanks to four gold medals in the Nazi-hued Olympics two years earlier, his equal as a 20th century sports icon. Furthermore, occasional jingoist that I am, I was also loathe to have my nose rubbed in my native land's sometimes less-than-exemplary past by what some of my ilk would call a "@#%&* furriner" (Mr. McRae resides in London).

But all such feelings were quickly replaced by keen appreciation of the skill and tenderness the author uses in intertwining the biographies of two men of remarkably similar character, disposition, and appetite, who achieved greatness but also endured hardship and ostracism, first because they were black, and later because they didn't act black enough.

Louis, of course, was offered to and accepted by white society as the anti-Jack Johnson—for which, McRae points out, a resentful and jealous Johnson never forgave him. Given Joe's quiet nature, the image wasn't a stretch, although McRae confirms that when it came to women, "The Brown Bomber" was as insatiable as the first black heavyweight champion.

Owens, too, was so low-key that it didn't ruffle him, at least on the surface, to go from a stadium full of cheering fans to eating in the parking lot of a restaurant in which "coloreds" weren't allowed to sit down for a meal; and from outracing Hitler's so-called "Master Race" to toeing the mark against animals. He and Louis stoically persevered through the cultural schizophrenia (and also their own missteps) without rebellion or complaint, for which they were mocked and condemned in the 1960s by a new generation of militant black athletes that included Muhammad Ali.

McRae's earlier book, *Dark Trade: Lost In Boxing*, was excellent, but he has resoundingly trumped himself with this portrait so sensitive and masterful that, were he around today, even Dad—the shrewdest judge of books, boxers, and BS I ever knew—would hymn it wholeheartedly.

—Pete Ehrmann

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Czyz: License suspension doubled

Former lightweight titlist **Paul Spadafora**, whose alleged shooting of his girlfriend was detailed in the March issue of THE RING EXTRA, was ordered in mid-November to stand trial on attempted homicide and aggravated assault charges. No trial date had been set as of press time ... In other gun-play news, 22-year-old **Matthew Bogedain**, who was on trial for shooting junior middleweight contender **Kassim Ouma** in November 2002, was found not guilty on all counts by a West Palm Beach, Florida, jury in mid-November ... Don't expect to see two-division former titleholder **Bobby Czyz** behind the wheel of a car anytime soon. Following his fourth drunken-driving offense in six years, Czyz had his driver's license suspended for 10 years—meaning he won't be doing any legal driving for *20* years, because he had already received a 10-year suspension after his previous DWI conviction ... Recently retired heavyweight **Brian Nielsen** was arrested in mid-November for pushing and threatening police in Copenhagen, Denmark. Nielsen and four others were apprehended after an episode with officers who were arresting a friend of theirs outside of a nightclub. A couple of weeks later, a Danish court sentenced Nielsen to 40 days in prison ... In mid-November, a Doylestown, Pennsylvania, judge threw out former heavyweight champ **Joe Frazier's** suit regarding 140 acres of land that Smokin' Joe alleged were wrongly taken from him in 1979. The judge ruled that the statute of limitation in the case had expired and Frazier and his lawyer, daughter **Jacqui Frazier-Lyde**, had failed to produce sufficient evidence ... Another Hall of Fame fighter, **Sugar Ray Leonard**, had a much better court experience in late-November, when a Los Angeles Superior Court jury awarded his promotional company, Sugar Ray Leonard Boxing, $443,315.41 for a series of wrongful acts, including breach of contract, committed by South Carolina promoter **Bobby Mitchell** prior to a proposed June '02 boxing event ... **Oscar De La Hoya's** Golden Boy Promotions announced in late-November that it signed Hall of Fame promoter **Don Chargin** to a five-year contract extension as the company's matchmaker ... Flyweight prospect **Brian Viloria**, the lone fighter whom promoter **Lou DiBella** didn't release in the immediate aftermath of his late-October dispute with manager **Gary Gittelsohn**, was released from his contract with DiBella in late-November. Gittelsohn later told the press that Viloria was close to signing a new multi-year deal with another promoter ... Colombian featherweight **Ruben Palacio**, who won the WBO 126-pound belt in September 1992 but had to retire without fighting again because he tested positive for HIV in '93, died of AIDS in mid-November. Palacio, 45-11-2 (19), fell short in his first three tries for alphabet titles before upsetting British prospect **Colin McMillan** via eighth-round kayo for the WBO strap. After his retirement, Palacio spent four years in jail in the U.S. after a drug trafficking conviction, then went back home to Colombia, where he passed away in a hospital at age 40 ... Veteran trainer **Bill Slayton** died in late-October at the age of 81, following a lengthy illness. The Los Angeles-based Slayton trained the likes of **Ken Norton**, **Michael Dokes**, **Adolph Pruitt**, and, most recently, **Lamon Brewster** ... Ending on a much more positive note, congratulations to junior middleweight champ **Shane Mosley** and his wife **Jin** on the birth of their daughter, **Mee-Yon Jinae**, in mid-November. Mee-Yon is Shane and Jin's third child together.

Slayton: Noted trainer dies at 81

THE PUNCHLINES

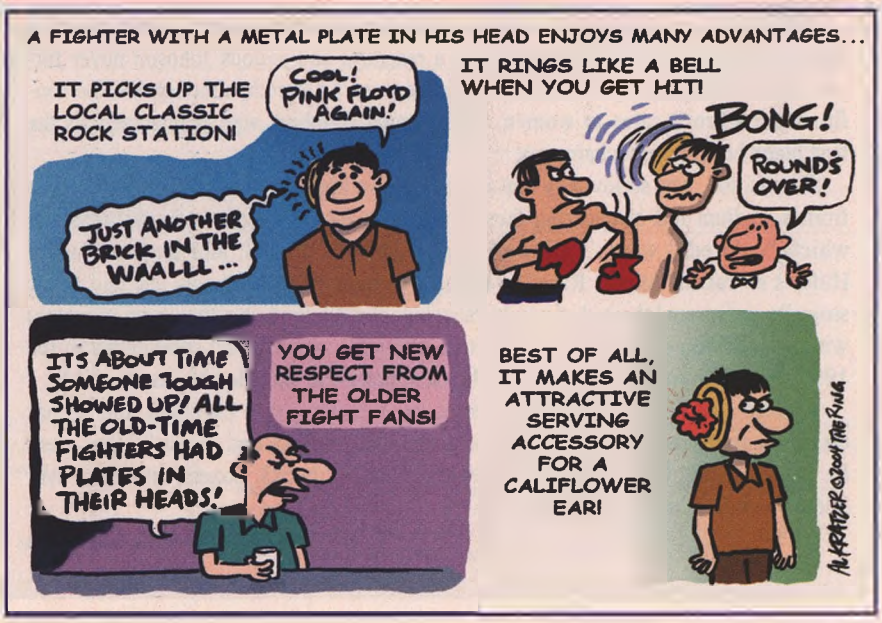
"I'm never counted among the pound-for-pound best. Maybe the best pound-for-pound punch eater."

—Junior welterweight contender Arturo Gatti

"What sponsor wants to come aboard when one promoter is saying the sport is crooked and another promoter is saying the sport is dying?"

—Promoter Gary Shaw, taking shots at the negative attitudes of fellow promoters Bob Arum and Lou DiBella

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



The RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

Ratings Analysis

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **ROY JONES**
   Heavyweight/Light Heavyweight
2. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Middleweight
3. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Junior Middleweight
4. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Middleweight
5. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Lightweight
6. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
   Featherweight
7. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
8. **ERIK MORALES**
   Junior Lightweight
9. **RICARDO MAYORGA**
   Welterweight
10. **JAMES TONEY**
    Heavyweight/Cruiserweight

(For period ended December 3, 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Clinton Woods (eighth last issue) advances to sixth following his draw with fourth-ranked Glencoffe Johnson. Woods' rise pushes down Silvio Branco (sixth last issue) and Montell Griffin (seventh last issue) one spot each.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Eric Regan (10th last issue) exits following a kayo loss to unranked Pedro Ortega. Raymond Joval replaces Regan at number 10.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: Javier Jauregui (ninth last issue) advances to number seven on the strength of his kayo of Leavander Johnson. This move shoves down Alejandro Gonzalez from seventh to eighth and Julien Lorcy from eighth to ninth.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Manny Pacquiao (ranked number one at junior feather last issue) is the new world champion following his knockout of Marco Antonio Barrera, who is now number two at 126 pounds. Scott Harrison (third last issue) avenged his loss to Manuel Medina (second last issue), and they are now ranked third and fourth, respectively. Barrera's demotion forces everybody rated below Harrison and Medina down one spot each, which results in Zahir Raheem (10th last issue) departing.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: With Pacquiao now fighting at 126 pounds, Oscar Larios (second last issue) moves up to number one. Everybody else rated last issue advances one place each, with Jorge Lacierva newly aboard at number 10. Even though champion Paulie Ayala has not defended the title since he won it in February 2002, Ayala and his manager, Scott Sherman, have assured The Ring that Paulie intends to continue to campaign at 122 pounds, despite the fact his last two bouts have been as a featherweight. Even though it's an uncomfortable situation, in keeping with The Ring's championship policy, Ayala stays champion.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Streaking Jose Navarro replaces Oscar Andrade at number 10 following a good win over Reynaldo Hurtado.

FLYWEIGHTS: Alexander Mahmutov (ninth last issue) is gone following a kayo loss to seventh-ranked Omar Narvaez. This bumps up Vic Darchinyan from 10th to ninth and makes room for Brahim Asloum at number 10.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: Yosam Choi falls from fifth to eighth as a result of his decision loss to second-ranked Beibis Mendoza. Choi's demotion allows Melchor Cob-Castro (sixth last issue), Mhikiza Myekeni (seventh last issue), and Kermin Guardia (eighth last issue) to climb one rung each.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Marco Antonio Barrera's kayo loss to Manny Pacquiao was so devastating, last issue's number-three entry exits. Pacquiao debuts at number six. The reshuffling pushes up Shane Mosley (fourth last issue), Oscar De La Hoya (fifth last issue), and Floyd Mayweather (sixth last issue) one notch each. Look for another possible shakeup following December action featuring Bernard Hopkins (second) and Ricardo Mayorga (ninth). ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended December 3, 2003

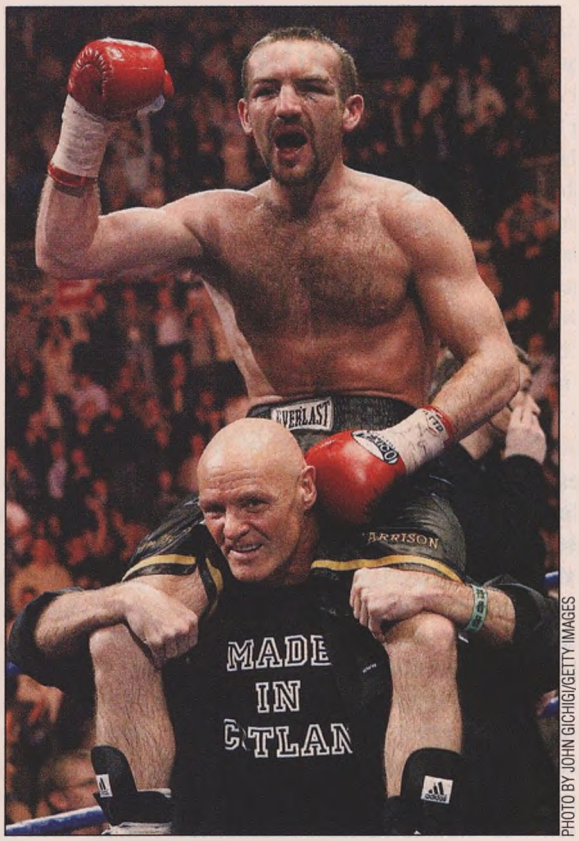


PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Scott Harrison climbed above Manuel Medina at featherweight by stopping him in their rematch

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled in one of two ways: by unifying all three alphabet titles in a division; or by winning a box-off between THE RING'S number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

Ratings By The Editors
Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: LENNOX LEWIS
England 41-2-1 (32)

1. **CHRIS BYRD**
Flint, MI 37-2 (20)
2. **CORRIE SANDERS**
South Africa 39-2 (29)
3. **ROY JONES**
Pensacola, FL 49-1 (38)
4. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 32-2 (31)
5. **JAMES TONEY**
Ann Arbor, MI 67-4-2 (43)
6. **DAVID TUA**
New Zealand 42-3-1 (37)
7. **HASIM RAHMAN**
Baltimore, MD 35-4-1 (29)
8. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 41-2 (38)
9. **FRES OQUENDO**
Puerto Rico 24-2 (15)
10. **MIKE TYSON**
Catskill, NY 50-4 (44)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: SHANE MOSLEY
Pomona, CA 39-2 (35)

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
Los Angeles, CA 36-3 (29)
2. **WINKY WRIGHT**
St. Petersburg, FL 46-3 (25)
3. **FERNANDO VARGAS**
Oxnard, CA 23-2 (21)
4. **JAVIER CASTILLEJO**
Spain 56-5 (38)
5. **DANIEL SANTOS**
Puerto Rico 27-2-1 (20)
6. **KASSIM OUMA**
W. Palm Beach, FL 18-1-1 (12)
7. **VERNO PHILLIPS**
Aurora, CO 36-9-1 (18)
8. **J.C. CANDELO**
Colombia 27-5-3 (19)
9. **ALEX GARCIA**
Mexico 22-0 (21)
10. **BRONCO McKART**
Monroe, MI 46-5 (30)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: MANNY PACQUIAO
Philippines 38-2-1 (29)

1. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 42-2 (33)
2. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
Mexico 57-4 (40)
3. **SCOTT HARRISON**
Scotland 20-2-1 (10)
4. **MANUEL MEDINA**
Mexico 62-14 (28)
5. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
Albuquerque, NM 53-3-2 (28)
6. **DERRICK GAINER**
Pensacola, FL 39-6-1 (24)
7. **INJIN CHI**
South Korea 27-2-1 (16)
8. **MICHAEL BRODIE**
England 35-1-1 (23)
9. **WILLIAM ABELYAN**
Glendale, CA 23-4-1 (12)
10. **ROCKY JUAREZ**
Houston, TX 19-0 (14)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: PAULIE AYALA
Ft. Worth, TX 35-2 (12)

1. **OSCAR LARIOS**
Mexico 50-3-1 (35)
2. **MAHYAR MONSHIPOUR**
France 23-2-2 (14)
3. **JOSE LUIS VALBUENA**
Venezuela 23-2-1 (13)
4. **ISRAEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico 35-3 (26)
5. **SALIM MEDJKOUNE**
France 41-4-1 (21)
6. **JOAN GUZMAN**
Dominican Republic 20-0 (16)
7. **OSAMU SATO**
Japan 26-2-3 (15)
8. **YODDAMRONG SITHYODTHONG**
Thailand 35-1-1 (19)
9. **NEDAL HUSSEIN**
Australia 31-1 (18)
10. **JORGE LACIERVA**
Mexico 23-5-4 (15)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 30-3 (27)
2. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM**
Thailand 41-1-2 (29)
3. **TIM AUSTIN**
Cincinnati, OH 25-1-1 (22)
4. **CRUZ CARBAJAL**
Mexico 24-11-1 (20)
5. **JOHNNY BREDAHL**
Denmark 54-2 (26)
6. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan 23-3-3 (14)
7. **PETE FRISSINA**
Tarpon Springs, FL 27-3-1 (15)
8. **GENARO GARCIA**
Mexico 30-4 (18)
9. **SILENCE MABUZA**
South Africa 15-0 (14)
10. **HERIBERTO RUIZ**
Mexico 28-2-2 (13)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 200 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JAMES TONEY** — Ann Arbor, MI 67-4-2 (43)
2. **VASSILIY JIROV** — Kazakhstan 33-1 (29)
3. **JEAN-MARC MORMECK** — France 29-2 (21)
4. **WAYNE BRAITHWAITE** — Guyana 19-0 (16)
5. **JOHNNY NELSON** — England 43-12-2 (28)
6. **GUILLERMO JONES** — Panama 29-2-2 (22)
7. **O'NEIL BELL** — Atlanta, GA 21-1-1 (20)
8. **EZRA SELLERS** — Washington, D.C. 26-5 (24)
9. **SEBASTIAN ROTHMAN** — South Africa 17-1-2 (12)
10. **VIRGIL HILL** — Bismarck, ND 49-4 (23)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: ROY JONES — Pensacola, FL 49-1 (38)

1. **ANTONIO TARVER** — Orlando, FL 21-2 (17)
2. **JULIO GONZALEZ** — Huntington Beach, CA 35-1 (22)
3. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** — Germany 48-1 (38)
4. **GLENCOFFE JOHNSON** — Miami, FL 39-9-2 (27)
5. **ERIC HARDING** — Philadelphia, PA 21-3-1 (7)
6. **CLINTON WOODS** — England 35-2-1 (21)
7. **SILVIO BRANCO** — Italy 49-6-2 (30)
8. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** — Chicago, IL 44-4 (29)
9. **RICHARD HALL** — Winter Haven, FL 27-4 (25)
10. **MEHDI SAHNOUNE** — France 24-1 (21)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOE CALZAGHE** — Wales 36-0 (29)
2. **SVEN OTTKE** — Germany 32-0 (6)
3. **ANTHONY MUNDINE** — Australia 19-1 (14)
4. **ANTWUN ECHOLS** — Davenport, IA 29-5-1 (26)
5. **ERIC LUCAS** — Canada 36-5-3 (13)
6. **BYRON MITCHELL** — Ozark, AL 25-3-1 (18)
7. **MARKUS BEYER** — Germany 28-1 (11)
8. **CHARLES BREWER** — Philadelphia, PA 40-9 (28)
9. **MADS LARSEN** — Denmark 45-2 (37)
10. **SYD VANDERPOOL** — Canada 34-2 (23)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS — Philadelphia, PA 42-2-1 (31)

1. **WILLIAM JOPPY** — Washington, D.C. 34-2-1 (25)
2. **HOWARD EASTMAN** — England 38-1 (35)
3. **ROBERT ALLEN** — Atlanta, GA 36-4 (27)
4. **RODNEY JONES** — Lafayette, LA 30-3 (19)
5. **SERGEY TATEVOSYAN** — Russia 19-3 (13)
6. **JERMAIN TAYLOR** — Little Rock, AK 18-0 (13)
7. **EVANS OURE ASHIRA** — Denmark 23-0 (13)
8. **FELIX STURM** — Germany 19-0 (9)
9. **KINGSLEY IKEKE** — Canada 18-1 (10)
10. **RAYMOND JOVAL** — Netherlands 31-2 (14)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: RICARDO MAYORGA — Nicaragua 25-3-1 (22)

1. **VERNON FORREST** — Atlanta, GA 35-2 (26)
2. **ANTONIO MARGARITO** — Mexico 29-3 (20)
3. **CORY SPINKS** — St. Louis, MO 31-2 (11)
4. **THOMAS DAMGAARD** — Denmark 32-0 (25)
5. **MICHELE PICCIRILLO** — Italy 39-2 (25)
6. **MANUEL GOMEZ** — Mexico 24-10 (18)
7. **ANDREW LEWIS** — Guyana 22-2-1 (20)
8. **TEDDY REID** — Adelphi, MD 22-5-1 (16)
9. **JAWAID KHALIQ** — England 22-1-1 (13)
10. **JOSE RIVERA** — Worcester, MA 37-3-1 (24)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: KOSTYA TSZYU — Australia 30-1 (24)

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL** — Washington, D.C. 52-3 (30)
2. **ZAB JUDAH** — Brooklyn, NY 29-1 (21)
3. **ARTURO GATTI** — Jersey City, NJ 36-6 (28)
4. **VIVIAN HARRIS** — Brooklyn, NY 23-1-1 (16)
5. **DeMARCUS CORLEY** — Washington, D.C. 28-2-1 (16)
6. **OKTAY URKAL** — Germany 34-1 (10)
7. **RICKY HATTON** — England 33-0 (25)
8. **OMAR WEIS** — Los Angeles, CA 36-4-3 (16)
9. **MIGUEL COTTO** — Puerto Rico 17-0 (14)
10. **JUNIOR WITTER** — England 27-1-2 (16)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: FLOYD MAYWEATHER — Grand Rapids, MI 31-0 (21)

1. **JUAN LAZCANO** — El Paso, TX 33-2-1 (25)
2. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO** — Mexico 48-6-1 (44)
3. **LEONARD DORIN** — Canada 21-0-1 (7)
4. **STEVE JOHNSTON** — Denver, CO 35-3-1 (17)
5. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN** — Uzbekistan 36-0 (22)
6. **COURTNEY BURTON** — Benton Harbor, MI 19-1(11)
7. **JAVIER JAUREGUI** — Mexico 47-10-2 (34)
8. **ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ** — Mexico 49-5-1 (33)
9. **JULIEN LORCY** — France 56-3-2 (41)
10. **VICTORIANO SOSA** — Dominican Republic 36-3-2 (26)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ACELINO FREITAS** — Brazil 34-0 (31)
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR** — Miami, FL 30-1 (19)
3. **JESUS CHAVEZ** — Mexico 40-2 (28)
4. **CARLOS HERNANDEZ** — Bellflower, CA 40-3-1 (24)
5. **ERIK MORALES** — Mexico 45-1 (34)
6. **DIEGO CORRALES** — Sacramento, CA 37-2 (31)
7. **STEVE FORBES** — Las Vegas, NV 23-2 (6)
8. **YODSANAN NANTHACHAI** — Thailand 39-2-1 (32)
9. **CASSIUS BALOYI** — South Africa 28-1 (16)
10. **JORGE BARRIOS** — Argentina 39-2-1 (29)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA** — North Korea 29-2-1 (8)
2. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ** — Venezuela 24-0 (23)
3. **MARK JOHNSON** — Washington, D.C. 42-3 (27)
4. **LUIS PEREZ** — Nicaragua 21-1 (14)
5. **FERNANDO MONTIEL** — Mexico 26-1-1 (20)
6. **MARTIN CASTILLO** — Mexico 24-1 (15)
7. **FELIX MACHADO** — Venezuela 22-4-1 (11)
8. **MAURICIO PASTRANA** — Colombia 30-4-1 (20)
9. **LUIS BOLANO** — Colombia 38-0 (28)
10. **JOSE NAVARRO** — Los Angeles, CA 19-0 (7)

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ERIC MOREL** — Madison, WI 33-0 (18)
2. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM** — Thailand 49-2 (26)
3. **IRENE PACHECO** — Colombia 28-0 (21)
4. **MZUKISI SIKALI** — South Africa 28-4-2 (17)
5. **MALCOLM TUNACAO** — Philippines 14-1-2 (10)
6. **PETER CULSHAW** — England 23-1-1 (12)
7. **OMAR NARVAEZ** — Argentina 15-0-2 (9)
8. **LORENZO PARRA** — Venezuela 21-0 (17)
9. **VIC DARCHINYAN** — Australia 19-0 (14)
10. **BRAHIM ASLOUM** — France 14-0 (6)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: ROSENDO ALVAREZ — Nicaragua 32-2-1 (21)

1. **JORGE ARCE** — Mexico 34-3-1 (25)
2. **BEIBIS MENDOZA** — Colombia 29-2 (23)
3. **PICHIT SIRIWAT** — Thailand 28-2 (13)
4. **NELSON DIEPPA** — Puerto Rico 19-2-2 (11)
5. **MELCHOR COB-CASTRO** — Mexico 66-9-4 (30)
6. **MBHIKIZA MYEKENI** — South Africa 17-1 (6)
7. **KERMIN GUARDIA** — Colombia 35-2 (21)
8. **YOSAM CHOI** — South Korea 25-3 (14)
9. **JOSE VICTOR BURGOS** — Mexico 36-13-2 (21)
10. **FAHLAN SAKKREERIN** — Thailand 50-3-2 (20)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOSE AGUIRRE** — Mexico 30-1-1 (19)
2. **NOEL ARAMBULET** — Venezuela 20-2-1 (10)
3. **DANIEL REYES** — Colombia 32-1-1 (27)
4. **YUTAKA NIDA** — Japan 14-1-3 (7)
5. **CHANA PORPAOIN** — Thailand 49-2-2 (17)
6. **KEITARO HOSHINO** — Japan 23-10 (6)
7. **JOMA GAMBOA** — Philippines 32-7-2 (22)
8. **ROBERTO LEYVA** — Mexico 22-2-1 (19)
9. **EDGAR CARDENAS** — Mexico 30-11-2 (16)
10. **IVAN CALDERON** — Puerto Rico 17-0 (3)

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

DOES THAT FINALLY CLEAR THINGS UP?

The '60s musical act The Mamas And The Papas (no doubt Evander Holyfield's all-time favorite group), once wrote a song called "Creeque Alley" because they were tired of being asked how they got their start and figured they'd answer the question once and for all in the lyrics. Well, you're not getting a Top 40 hit here, just a column, but the motivation behind it is similar. Your intrepid scribe is tired of being asked the same questions over and over again. Yes, Regis, this is my final answer—to all of them.

•*How do I become a boxing writer?* First of all, why would you want to become a fight scribe? Not even big-city newspapers are willing to "waste" a full-time beat writing position on the Sweet Science anymore, the handful of full-time staffers at the boxing magazines rarely leave their jobs, and freelancing opportunities are rare because newspaper and magazine editors run only a few features on the sport every year.

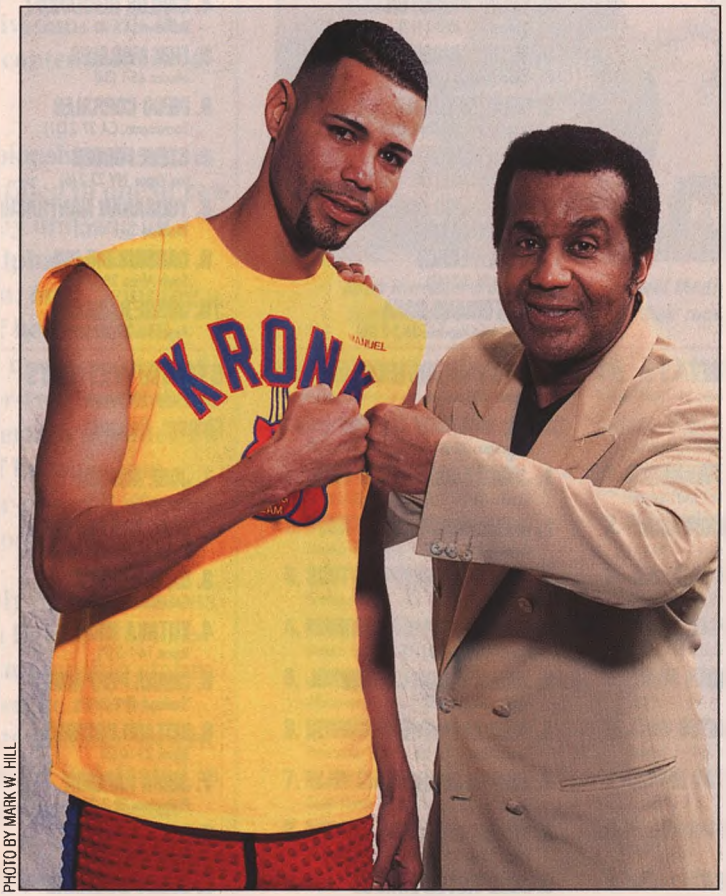


PHOTO BY MARK W. HILL

Ryan wants his kid training with Steward and wearing a Kronk t-shirt, just like prospect Wilmer Torres

If you do, however, dream of one day toiling in this salt mine, and are patient enough to wait for your chance to do so, my best advice is to read as much quality boxing writing as you can get your mitts on, write a fight story or analysis after every major bout (even though you know it's not going to be published), and polish your reporting skills by working as a stringer or freelancer covering some other subject. Trust me, it's your journalistic ability that will get you hired one day, not the fact that you can name all of the opponents Leo Randolph beat in the '76 Olympics.

•*If your son were a fighter, whom would you get to train and manage him?* Emanuel Steward. The Kronk boss disproves the theory that punchers are born, not taught, and he has a knack for maneuvering his warriors—even the ordinary ones—into high rankings, title shots, and financial security. One stipulation, though: Steward would have to train my kid personally, not pass him off to one of his assistants while monitoring the proceedings from a distance.

If Steward couldn't fit us into his schedule, or if Junior didn't look good in the Kronk's red-and-yellow, then Teddy Atlas would get the call. Why? Because if the kid got out of line, Atlas would bounce his ass right out of the gym without worrying for a second what I, his mother, or Max Kellerman thought about it.

•*What fights do you most want to see?* Roy

Jones vs. Lennox Lewis, Kostya Tszyu vs. Floyd Mayweather, Bernard Hopkins vs. Oscar De La Hoya, Manny Pacquiao vs. Erik Morales, and De La Hoya vs. Ricardo Mayorga.

•*What's the dumbest rule in boxing?* The one that says a fighter who's hit low and can't continue within five minutes loses. In the words of M.G. Tyson, that's ludicrous! It insinuates that a guy who hits the deck from a low blow is faking, and it punishes someone who did nothing wrong except get his junk in the way of a cheap shot.

•*Is Jones the greatest fighter of all-time*? Are you nuts! Those of you who've been suggesting this in recent years should ask yourselves the following questions: Would Sugar Ray Robinson have ducked Dariusz Michalczewski? Would Robinson have gone the distance with Lou Del Valle, Reggie Johnson, David Telesco, Julio Gonzalez, John Ruiz, and Antonio Tarver? Would Robinson have set up an exploratory committee, taken a Gallup poll, and visited a blue-haired, octogenarian soothsayer every time he considered signing for a big fight?

•*Why, then, does the media go overboard when a fighter gets on a hot streak?* Two reasons. First, there aren't enough stars in the game, and the impatient press thinks it should tell the fans who the next sensation is, though, in reality, it's the other way around. Second, most of today's scribes didn't cover Robinson, Joe Louis, Henry Armstrong, and Rocky Marciano, and are tired of always hearing about the golden ages of yesteryear. So the guys at the computer keyboards have a tendency to keep looking at their own era through the lenses of rose-colored, *Coke-bottle* glasses.

•*What's the most realistic boxing movie? Ali*, starring Will Smith, because it closely followed the punching sequences from "The Greatest's" real bouts. Just about every other boxing flick this poor man's Roger Ebert ever saw exaggerates the volume of bombs fired in an average round, the effect of the blows (Have you ever seen a single movie punch that didn't snap a head back?), and the combatants' ability to absorb incredible punishment. *Rocky* and its sequels were perfect examples.

Even more annoying, though, is when a true story detours far from reality simply for dramatic effect. If you saw *Raging Bull*, you probably thought Robinson had attacked Jake LaMotta with a chainsaw while lifting the middleweight title in 1951. Watch a film of the actual battle, however, and you'll see that even though Sugar Ray wasn't exactly giving his rival a Swedish massage, he didn't leave him sliced and diced so viciously that blood dripped down the ropes.

•*Is Arturo Gatti a Hall of Famer?* No. He's a television legend, a walking highlight film, and one of those rare athletes who'll guarantee that you underpaid for your ticket, no matter what it cost. But three unforgettable wars with Micky Ward—no Jose Napoles himself—doesn't make "Thunder" Hall-worthy. Let's not forget that Gatti has always had to be carefully matched, and that he twice lost to Ivan Robinson, was stopped by Angel Manfredy, and was pasted when he stepped far up in class to tackle De La Hoya.

PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Thanks to losses like this, Ryan won't be voting Gatti into the Hall

•*Why don't you like women's boxing?* If I wanted to watch women get beaten up, I'd rent the aforementioned *Raging Bull* or borrow "Chico" Corrales' home movies.

•*Did Ali really deserve to lose all three bouts to Ken Norton?* No, just the first. Norton gets no sympathy from me for his narrow defeats in the second and third showdowns, because he let Ali take control of the final round both times. Ali *did* do little enough to lose to Jimmy Young, but the judges were right in concluding that they couldn't hand over the most prestigious crown in sports to a guy who spent 15 rounds ducking his body outside the ropes whenever a punch came near him.

•*What was the best fight you ever saw?* Hagler-Hearns.

•*What was the best fight you never saw?* Let's go with Ray Leonard-Aaron Pryor.

•*Who's the subject of your dream Q & A?* It's a tie between Marciano and Sonny Liston. Howard Cosell, Max Schmeling, Jack Johnson, Belinda Ali, or the Marquis of Queensberry wouldn't have been too shabby either.

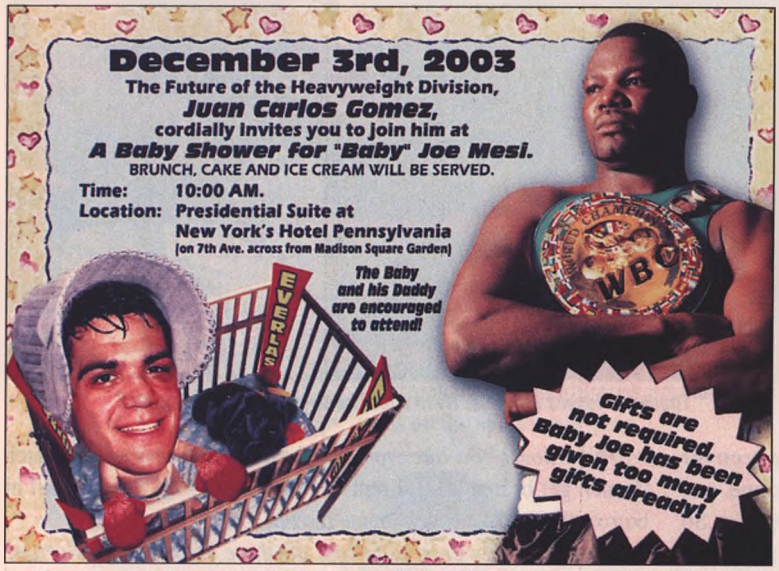
•*Who are your favorite fighters of all-time?* In order: Ali, Leonard, Earnie Shavers, Thomas Hearns, and Matthew Saad Muhammad.

•*Who are your favorite active fighters?* In order: Hopkins, Tszyu, Mayorga, Pacquiao, and Johnny Tapia.

•*Will there ever be a federal boxing commission?* Will there ever be a microphone that Don King passes by? A punch Gatti ducks? A tattoo Paul Spadafora thinks might be a little too garish for his torso?

•*Will you ever give up your love for the game?* Sure, on the day when one-punch knockouts, final-round rallies, and round-card girls in string bikinis are permanently outlawed. Until then, seconds out ... ■

Camera Clicks



When you nickname yourself "Baby," you open yourself up to mockery from other fighters, and that's what Joe Mesi has recently had to endure at the hands of Juan Carlos Gomez. The Cuban heavyweight contender sent many members of the media this humorous invitation to a "baby shower" for Mesi; whether it will help him get a date across the crib from the popular Mesi remains to be seen.

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

It's photos like this that make you glad your copy of The Ring doesn't come with any audio features. If it did, you'd be well-advised to turn the volume down, as most viewers probably did during Oscar De La Hoya's November 22 pay-per-view show, which featured the not-quite-Lampley-and-Merchant-like commentary of Raul Marquez and Mario Solis.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Throwing your hat into the ring: Immediately at the conclusion of Michael Gomez' dramatic upset kayo of Alex Arthur in Edinburgh, Scotland, the sombreros started flying, leaving Gomez with little reaction time to position his head underneath the airborne lid. Needless to say, Arthur was in no mood to participate in the Mexican hat dance.

PHOTO BY SCOTT ROMER

Ali and Dalai: Two of the world's most famous peace advocates, the Dalai Lama and Muhammad Ali, met for the first time recently, at the dedication of an interfaith temple in Bloomington, Indiana. Reportedly, the main topic of conversation between the two was a potential megabucks match between the Tibetan spiritual leader's daughter and Laila Ali.

Two of the more colorful fringe contenders of the 1980s, heavyweight Mitch "Blood" Green and middleweight Teddy "The Irish" Mann, met up in New York recently at a meeting for F.I.S.T., Gerry Cooney's organization that helps fighters transition to life after boxing. Now someone just needs to help Green transition to life after geri-curl with something other than that fedora-over-do-rag look.

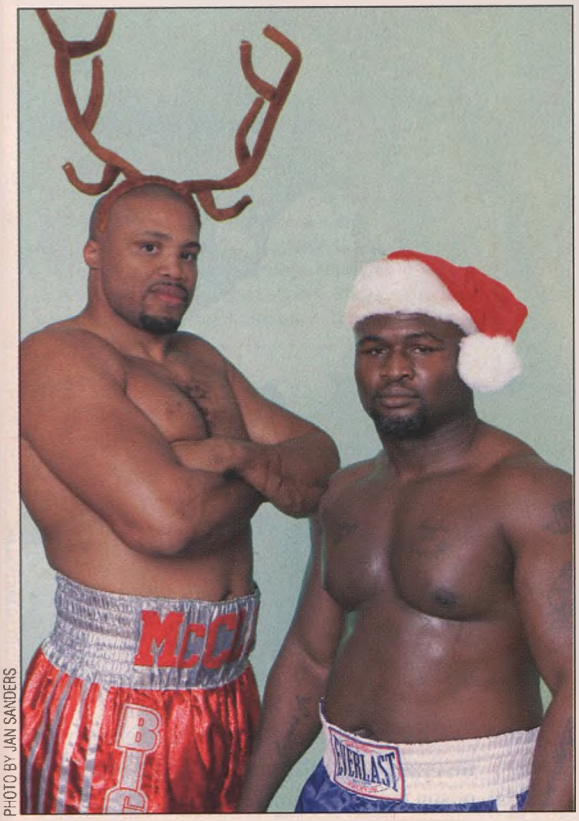


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

Seeing how much money Will Ferrell made this holiday season for dressing like an elf, Jameel McCline and James Toney got into the Christmas spirit at a recent photo shoot by dressing like a reindeer and Santa Claus. Toney's gut will probably be slightly less Santa-like by fight time, while McCline's nose just might be a little more Rudolph-like by the time their February 7 heavyweight battle is over with.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

Why did Kirk Johnson agree to pose with this enormous fish? Just for the halibut. If Rocky Balboa can batter a side of beef in Philly, then we suppose that in Johnson's native Halifax, Nova Scotia, using a halibut as a heavybag makes perfect sense. And the best part for Johnson is that the halibut has no beltline for him to stray below.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

You're supposed to feed your opponent leather, not noodles! Kimio Furesawa, preparing to challenge Miguel Canto for the WBC flyweight title in June '77, helps the Mexican champ with his chopsticks a few days before the bout. If this was an attempt to get Canto to come in over the weight, it didn't work; Canto weighed in at 112 on the nose, and beat Furesawa by unanimous decision.

NEW FACES

DANIEL EDOUARD

Middleweight

By Joe Santoliquito

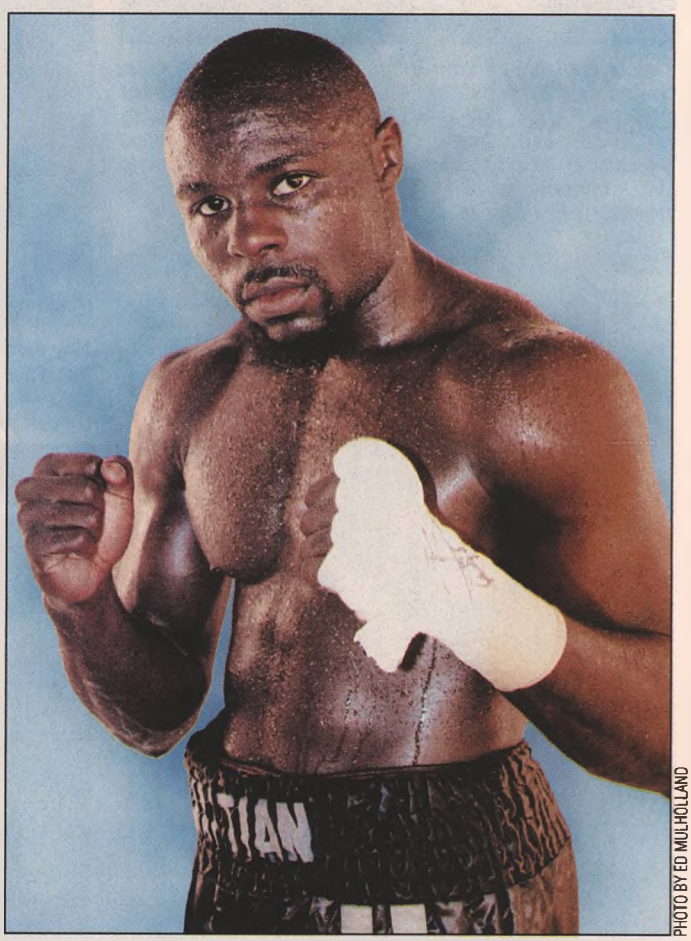


PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

The specter of the fat kid looms behind Daniel Edouard every time he enters the ring. The 23-year-old middleweight, secure in the present reality that he's overcome his issues of insecurity and low self-esteem, derives incentive from the image. It's handy ammunition when he's tiring late in a fight, or when his arms feel too heavy to lift, or when the blood and sweat pouring down his face make him wonder why he's even in the ring.

"Fat Albert" was what they called him. Edouard remembers the times when he was the target of callous kids. He'd laugh with the rest of the kids in the schoolyard, but deep down, it stung. Like it did when no one would accept his offers to visit his home, accompanied by the ugly retort, "I don't eat cat," in reference to Edouard's Haitian background.

Anger built inside Edouard that he still carries with him today, only he's learned to harness that rage, unleashing it on anyone standing across from him in the ring. The 5'10" Edouard won the battle with his temper, controlling it to such a point that it now benefits him.

That he's learned to turn his rage into ring success—rather than letting it land him a long prison term—is a minor miracle. "The Haitian Sensation" is no longer the roly-poly, 5'5", 200-pound 12-year-old with constantly clenched fists.

"I got a lot of fat jokes, and it made you always be on the defensive. I always got in a

(Continued on page 62)

PRO RECORD

2002		
March 22	Rod Jacobs, Melville, NY	KO 1
April 23	Cesar Gomera, New York City	KO 4
May 25	Altoria Horne, Boynton, FL	KO 2
June 21	Morgan Wilson, Watertown, NY	W 4
July 25	Tucker Lambert, Chester, WV	KO 2
Sept. 27	Prescott Gray, West Palm Beach, FL	W 6
Oct. 12	Oriol Martinez, West Palm Beach	W 4
Nov. 27	Hector Ramirez, Erie, PA	KO 1
2003		
Jan. 31	Julian Townsend, West Palm Beach	KO 2
March 21	Bertrand Tchandjeu, Dover, DE	KO 1
May 30	Romero Johnson, Ledyard, CT	W 6
June 27	Earl Allen, Atlantic City	W 4
Aug. 22	Tim Shocks, Choctaw, MS	W 8
Oct. 3	Miguel Espino, Las Vegas	W 10

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
14	14	0	0	7

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★ Terry Norris
★ Jeff Fenech
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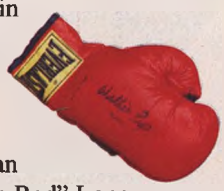
★ Nino Benvenuti
★ "Irish" Micky Ward
★ Paulie Ayala
★ Ricardo "Finito" Lopez
★ Sir Henry Cooper
★ Livingstone Bramble
★ Donald Curry
★ Tommy Morrison
★ Angelo Dundee



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TRIUMPH WITHOUT VICTORY

ANTONIO TARVER: "It's Not About ROY JONES Anymore"

By Johnnie Whitehead

PHOTOS BY WILL HART/HBO

Antonio Tarver always knew his moment would come. He'd be in the limelight, atop the light heavyweight division, taking a bow before a sea of admirers and a dejected foil in Roy Jones.

"Bernard Hopkins couldn't do it. James Toney couldn't do it. John Ruiz couldn't do it," Tarver said after becoming the first man who could make a case for finishing ahead on points after a professional fight with Jones. "Roy was and is everything that everybody said that he was. But what does that make me?"

More importantly, where does that place Tarver in terms of his future?

Despite realizing his dream match with his nemesis, the final scene wasn't quite how Tarver had imagined it. He lost an unpopular majority decision and his alphabet belts to world champion Jones on November 8 at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

"It was a consolation," Tarver said of winning over an initially pro-Jones gathering of 8,794. "But my immediate future was hurt because we had a rematch clause that would've gave me the opportunity to get paid. I'm not going to be able to go to the negotiation table and say I want five million or six million dollars."

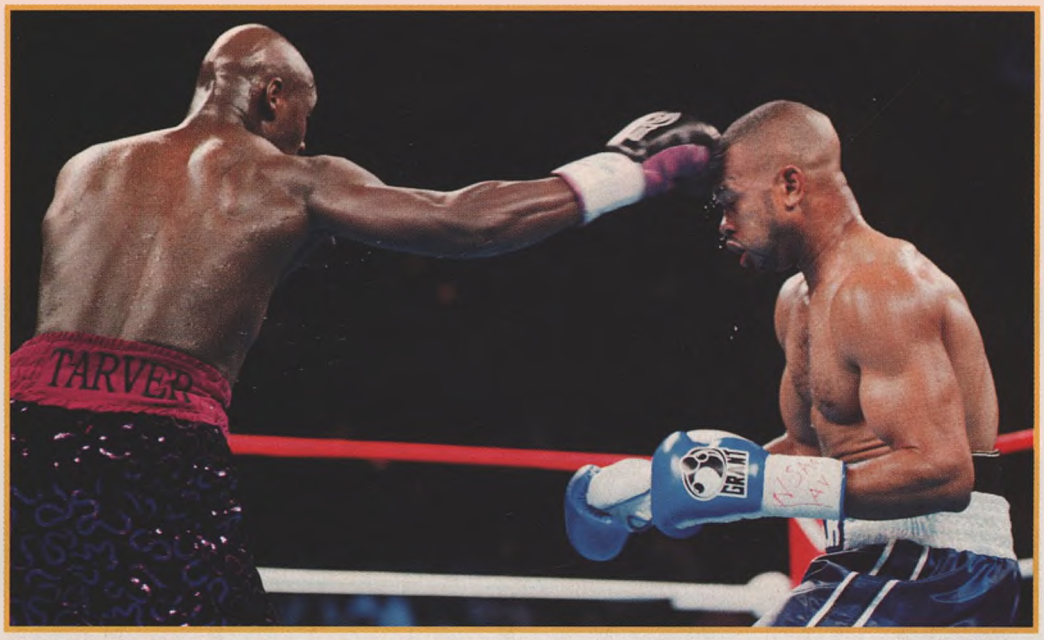
The pay-per-view numbers weren't bad—HBO estimated that the fight garnered 275,000 buys and produced about $12-million in revenue—especially considering the event lacked a significant undercard matchup to anchor it and was over-priced at $50.

Though Tarver, 21-2 (17), insists he should get the recognition in the form of more high-profile matchups on HBO, the 175-pound ranks are rather thin sans Jones, who said he'd be moving back up to heavyweight and attributed his lackluster performance to melting off roughly 25 pounds after campaigning at heavyweight earlier this year when he won a belt from Ruiz.

"He's in an unfortunate position because he's in a weight division that's not the most marketable anymore with Roy going back up," said Xavier James, HBO Sports executive vice president of programming. "There are still big fights for him. A fight against James Toney would be interesting. A fight against even a Bernard Hopkins coming up would be interesting, as well as a few other small-heavyweight-type of fights such as Tarver against Chris Byrd."

ESPN analyst Max Kellerman, however, would like to see Tarver fight his next logical opponent to solidify THE RING magazine championship.

"I'd like to see Tarver and Julio Gonzalez," said Kellerman of the Mexican-American who recently upset Dariusz Michalczewski to ascend to number two in THE RING ratings. "It's a real opportunity for HBO to really cross THE RING



Against challenger Tarver, Jones was unable to get away with the hands-low defense that has worked so well against most of his adversaries. A lot of that had to do with Tarver's underestimated hand speed, which enabled him to land this southpaw jab to the wide-open Jones' forehead.

championship over from hardcore recognition to mainstream acceptance."

James said his network could be interested in a Tarver-Gonzalez match, but that it wouldn't make any special concessions to make it happen.

The only thing that appears to be certain is that a rematch with the 35-year-old Jones, who proclaims he's holding out for a megafight with Mike Tyson to close out his career, isn't an option even if Tarver offers to move up and fight at a catch weight.

"Our mission right now is to keep pounding the drums to get the rematch," said Charles Muniz, who advises Tarver. "We think enough people turned against Roy that night. HBO seems to want a Hopkins fight for Antonio. If it's not Roy Jones, it's more than likely it will be Bernard Hopkins."

Now that sounds like an easy sell. The best middleweight vs. the best light heavyweight is a natural. The problem there, however, is that Tarver doesn't have any hardware as incentive for Hopkins, who earlier this year entertained moving up to face Toney for a cruiserweight belt before that fell apart.

Of course, there's that lingering perception that HBO has the power to force Jones, whom it has under contract, to grant Tarver a second chance ("HBO and everybody else wants to push this under the carpet," offered Muniz), but it would rather protect him for a more lucrative bout with Tyson, even though there are roadblocks that may prevent that fight from happening.

"I think they're giving us too much credit," said James. "We have influence because we're the ones writing the check, but Roy is at a point in his career where he can pick and choose who he fights. There's not anyone who can force Roy to fight Antonio Tarver. We didn't force him to fight Tarver this time. If HBO had that kind of influence, Roy vs. Holyfield would've happened instead of Roy vs. Tarver."

From Tarver's perspective, after being trapped on a one-way street heading to a dead-end career, he's finally in the driver's seat. He's even started speaking in the third person like his Pensacola, Florida, rival.

"Antonio Tarver ain't chasing nobody," he said. "I ain't promoting nobody. They've got to come to me now. I'm not giving anybody credit. I ain't calling out nobody. Antonio Tarver is on top."

Not very long ago, he was near rock bottom.

When Tarver turned pro, hardly anyone noticed. Though he was America's best

Jones' bread-and-butter punch throughout the fight was his right to the body, which he dug into Tarver's belly on a fairly regular basis to help win close rounds. But Jones' trademark rapid-fire combinations, which have accounted for so many victories, were conspicuously missing.

It was something of a shock to see Jones get hit with so many punches. Although he only opened up in spots, when he did, Tarver connected cleanly with both his left (above) and right (below) hands.

gold-medal hope going into the 1996 Olympics and one of the most celebrated amateurs in U.S. history (the year before, Tarver became the only U.S. boxer ever to win gold at the U.S. Nationals, Pan Am Games, and World Championships in the same year), he exited with just a bronze. He wasn't particularly liked by his teammates, who voted to strip him of recognition as captain, or by assistant coach Pat Burns, who often clashed with Tarver. The usually affable Al Mitchell, the head coach of the Olympic team, called one of Tarver's performances "lousy." No one had sympathy for him after he literally ate himself out of shape by feasting on free McDonald's double cheeseburgers during the Games.

By failing to win gold, the Orlando, Florida, native missed out on a $50,000 "I'm going to Disney World" commercial and a book deal that a local attorney arranged that would've paid him a similar sum. And while other Olympians such as Floyd Mayweather accepted an offer for an $87,500 trust from Bob Arum's Top Rank before the Olympics in exchange for giving him the rights to match future

After a big 10th, Tarver failed to seize the moment during the final two rounds, which allowed Jones to stage enough of a rally to eke out a majority decision victory in the toughest fight of his 15-year professional career.

offers from rival promoters, Tarver passed on it figuring that after the games he'd be in a better bargaining position. He was left holding the bag, and it was empty.

"I was the biggest thing going in the '96 Olympics. They jerked me," said Tarver, alluding to what he and then-ESPN boxing analyst Al Bernstein called a controversial defeat to eventual gold medalist and future cruiserweight titlist Vassiliy Jirov. "My loss didn't get the marketability that Roy Jones' did in Seoul. That hurt my transition into the pros."

Instead of being showcased on HBO for his pro debut, a luxury later enjoyed by many of the 2000 Olympians, Tarver found himself buried on undercards and fighting for purses that he found insulting for someone of his accomplishments. Fans booed him vehemently for his hot-dogging against journeymen at Philadelphia's Blue Horizon, where he frequently fought for promoter J Russell Peltz. Tarver wanted more money. Peltz wanted more action. It was a contentious match made in hell that mercifully ended in 1998.

"I had to fight in the Blue Horizon for no money," Tarver recalled. "They were talking down on me that I wasn't this or that. They wanted to discourage me and look down on me. My whole thing was, 'No, I believe in myself.' It's a testament of what a true champion is all about."

When Tarver's first big chance came—thanks in large part to signing with Don King, who was able to maneuver him quickly into an eliminator in June 2000 for the right to face Jones—he blew it. Tarver was beaten soundly by Eric Harding on ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*, suffering a broken jaw on the way to a unanimous decision loss. Tarver re-evaluated his commitment to boxing. He parted ways with longtime trainer Jimmy Williams, who often boasted that Tarver was his "crown jewel," and regrouped.

"I was training at home, laying in bed every night with my girl," said Tarver, who now works with Buddy McGirt and reports to Vero Beach, Florida, for camp. "I didn't understand the transition I had to make to be the best. I beat my first 16 opponents on talent alone. Once that loss came, things started to happen for me."

After noteworthy comeback wins against then-undefeated Lincoln Carter and top-10 contenders Chris Johnson and Reggie Johnson, Tarver, at Muniz' urging, accepted a risky rematch with Harding in July '02 on HBO, a bout he didn't need to get a shot at Jones since he had already been elevated to a mandatory position. "If you can't beat Eric Harding, you have no business fighting Roy Jones," Muniz reasoned. "Antonio is just an underrated kid. When you have that kind of amateur record he has (158-8), it's no coincidence."

Just when it looked like Harding was going to pull a repeat of their bout two years earlier, Tarver walked him into a counter left hand in the fourth round that effectively ended matters. Harding lasted into the fifth before Tarver finished him off and became THE RING's number-one contender. He followed up that perfor-

mance with a decisive win against Montell Griffin, the only fighter with a victory against Jones. Still, despite the run of impressive wins, hardly anyone thought Tarver displayed the genius in those outings to suggest he could deconstruct Jones.

But genius wasn't really required; just a polished, confident professional with the focus to match his science. For all of Jones' physical gifts and blinding speed, Tarver—like Vernon Forrest against Shane Mosley—offset him with basic boxing.

Jones showed against Harding and in his first fight with Griffin that what bothers him are counterpunchers and trap fighters like himself—not aggressors like Merqui Sosa, Thomas Tate, Vinny Paz, David Telesco, or Gonzalez, all of whom were on the end of violent, one-sided beatings.

Tarver didn't give up his distance by falling for feints to give Jones counterpunching opportunities. The 6'2" southpaw stayed in his envelope, kept a tight guard, and carefully picked his spots, though sometimes too infrequently, to shoot powershots. He lost his momentum in the middle rounds, but won over many after a spectacular 10th round in which he froze Jones, 49-1 (38), with a straight left hand and appeared on the verge of that something special.

Even after Jones finished well in rounds 11 and 12, most in the arena still thought Tarver deserved the decision. But Glen Hamada and Dave Harris scored for Jones by objectionably wide scores of 117-111 and 116-112, respectively, while Jerry Roth saw it 114-114. THE RING gave Jones a two-point edge, 116-114.

"I don't have a mark on me," Tarver said as he was leaving the golf course a few days later. "I celebrated at his afterparty where he didn't even show up. His fans celebrated me. The only thing that was hurting on me was my left hand. As big as my lips are, they didn't even get busted. I went up against Superman and I damn near choked him."

Tarver isn't choking back his feelings now. He wants his belts back. He wants an exclusive deal with a major network. He wants it all.

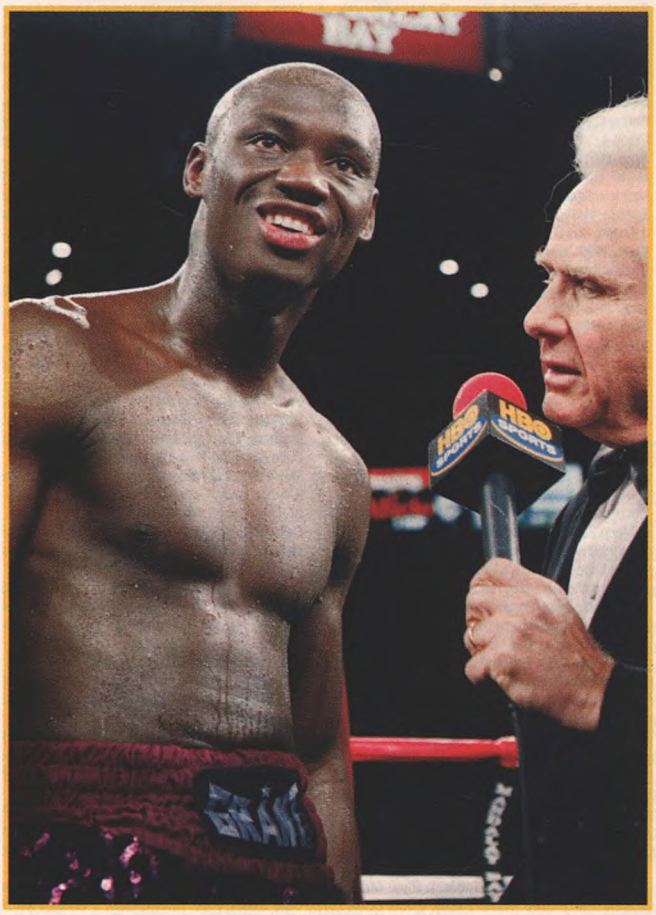
It might not be wise to bet against him. After all, he has overcome every stumbling block in his path professionally and personally, including a stint in drug rehabilitation for cocaine where he became inspired to box again as he watched Jones compete in the '88 Olympics.

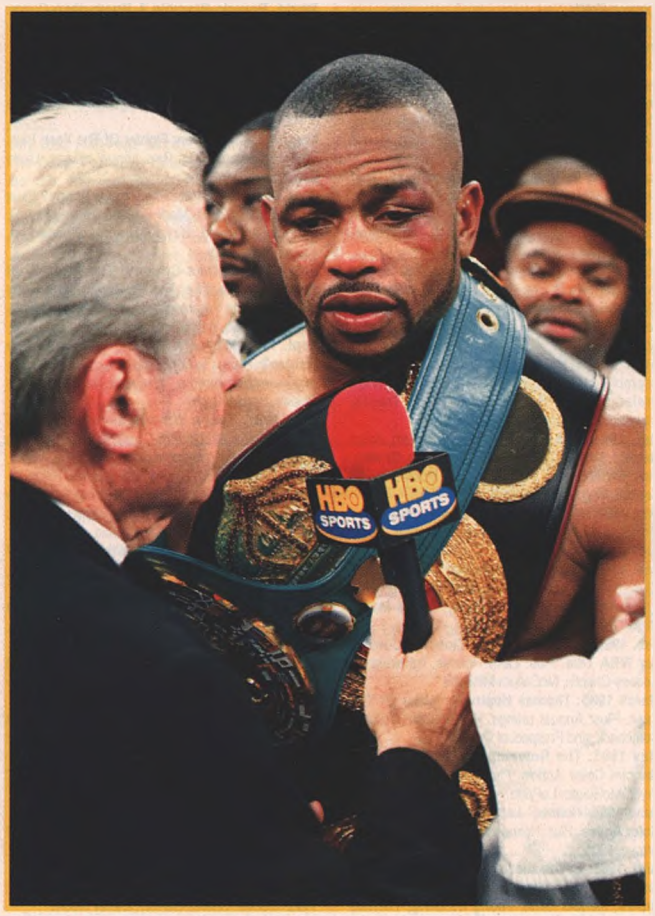
"It's not about Roy Jones anymore," said Tarver, who lost to Jones in a tournament when they were 13-year-old amateurs. "That's an old chapter. He can step off and we ain't going to miss him, because there's a new king in town. Roy Jones never broke me. Even in negotiations, I never gave this guy an inch.

"With this loss, I'm more popular. The only thing that didn't happen is that they didn't crown me. But the people lifted me up."

No one has ever had to tell Antonio Tarver to hold his head high. He always has. And things have always gotten better. ■

Johnnie Whitehead is an editor for USA Today and a regular contributor to this magazine.





Who really won? If you just go by how their faces looked during postfight interviews with Larry Merchant, it appears that the smiling, unmarked Tarver was the triumphant fighter. But although Jones got the victory, it was Tarver who got the biggest career boost.

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March 1982 (100-Page Special): Sanchez & Leonard: Fighters Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awrds, Chandler gatefold, 1981 in review, boxing calendar, powers-that-be.

Aug. 1982: Cooney—Is He The Real McCoy? Plus: Holmes-Cooney, Howard Davis Jr., Limon-Navarette, Rocky Marciano, British heavyweights.

Feb. 1983: Michael Dokes: Tainted Champion? Plus: Howard Cosell, Ray Mancini, Burn of the Month Club, Chacon-Limon.

March 1983 (108-Page Special): Larry Holmes—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Donald Curry, Milton McCrory, Fight, Upset, Comeback, and Prospect of the Year.

May 1983: Michael Spinks Wins It All. Plus: Spinks-Braxton color, Bob Arum, Marvin Hagler, Collins-LaPaglia.

June 1983: What Now For Ray Mancini? Plus: Lupe Pintor, Paddy Flood, Bonecrusher Smith, Charlie Brown, Frazier-Broad, Chang-Zapata, Holmes-Teofilo Stevenson, Tony Ayala, Jersey Joe Walcott.

Aug. 1983: Roberto Duran: One "Mas" Time. Plus: Larry Holmes, Colin Jones, Jimmy Montoya, Alexis Arguello, Billy Petrolle, Duran-Moore, Frazier-Bugner, Resto-Collins, Escalera-Hatcher.

Sept. 1983: Sugar Ray Leonard Talks About His Past, Present, And Future. Plus: Panama Lewis, Spinks-Mustafa Muhammad, Hagler-Duran preview, Johnson-Gotch.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.

June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: "That Championship Year." Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo, Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.

July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: RING Olympic Special. Plus: Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Mark Breland, Sugar Ray Leonard, Albert Davila, Bonecrusher-Bruno.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, James Broad, Pinklon Thomas, Julian Jackson.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

March 1985: Thomas Hearns—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Annual ratings, Fight, Upset, Round, Comeback, and Prospect of the Year.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To THE RING Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

May 1986: Hagler vs. Mugabi: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Bramble-Crawley, Tyson-Ferguson, 10 worst decisions.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, THE RING annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Evander Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new RING ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn—Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Lockridge & Mayweather, Tony Burton, Julio Cesar Chavez, blood.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray Is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler—Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be ... But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again—How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now*? Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

Oct. 1995 (92-Page Special): Mismatch? Don't Tell Peter McNeeley! Plus: Fights we'd like to see, Jo-el Scott, Bronco McKart, when stop fights?

Dec. 1995: Mike Tyson (vs. Peter McNeeley): The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Morrison-Lewis preview, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, 10 best chins.

Jan. 1996: King Bruno! A Hero Always ... A Winner At Last. Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Oscar De La Hoya, Chris Eubank, Eddie Perkins, who's hot/who's not.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

Sept. 1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, Mark Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, heavyweight hopefuls.

Nov. 1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, Ugly Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, exciting fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.

Dec. 1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: heavyweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, Puerto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad Muhammad.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

Oct. 1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At America. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman Sorjaturong, Bobby Dykes.

Nov. 1997: Is Mike Tyson Finished? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, De La Hoya-Camacho preview, Frankie Conley, Hall of Fame, gloves,

Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza, Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.

Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update, Art Shires, boxing I.Q.

March 1998 (92-Page Special): Into The Millennium With The Real Deal: The Ring's Timeline For Evander Holyfield. Plus: Hernandez-Hernandez, Briggs-Foreman, 10 champs recall "The Day I Won The Title," Johnny Thompson.

April 1998: Evander Holyfield: The Ring's Fighter Of The Year (Again!). Plus: Yory Boy Campas, Mullings-Norris, Pinkey Mitchell, Holyfield Q & A, Hamed-Kelley, Oscar De La Hoya.

June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.

July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.

Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.

Sept. 1998 (92-Page Special): This Man's Not Unbeatable! Five Top Trainers Reveal How To Solve The Hamed Puzzle. Plus: John Tate, Freddie Norwood, Andrew Golota, Roy Jones, 12 greatest finishes.

Oct. 1998: Really Hard Punch ... Really Soft Lips: Oscar Makes Legs Quiver In And Out Of The Ring. Plus: Hector Camacho Jr., Mayweather-Hernandez preview, *Tuesday Night Fights.*

Jan. 1999: Sugar Shane Mosley: The Sweet Tradition Continues. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Julio Cesar Chavez, Erik Morales, Ray "Windmill" White.

Feb. 1999: 1999! It's Gonna Be A Great Year For Boxing. Plus: Mike Tyson, Foreman-Holmes, David Reid, Eric Morel, Richie Mitchell, quitters.

March 1999: De La Hoya vs. Quartey: Does Bazooka Have The Weapons To Shoot Down Oscar? Plus: Sugar Shane Mosley, Lopez-Alvarez II, Roy Jones, Coley Wallace.

April 1999 (92-Page Special): Fighter Of The Year: Floyd Mayweather Jr.: "He's So Good, It's Scary!" Plus: Fernando Vargas, James Page, Luisito Espinosa, Robinson-Gatti II, Archie Moore, Carlos Oritz, 1998 diary.

May 1999: Is It All Over For Tyson? Plus: Terry Norris, Vinny Pazienza, Jesus Pimental, stoppages, mandatories.

June 1999: The Fans Have Spoken: Results Of The Ring Readers' Poll. Plus: Michael Grant, De La Hoya-Quartey, Antwun Echols, Ted Lowry.

July 1999 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Holyfield-Lewis, Felix Trinidad, Stevie Johnston, Emile Griffith, Phil Zwick.

Aug. 1999: Candidates For Greatness: Can Anyone Fill The Heavyweight Void? Plus: Tim Austin, Naseem Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Max Schmeling, Holyfield-Lewis.

Sept. 1999: Taking Stock In The Fight Game: Who's Hot, Who's Not. Plus: Tony Ayala, Keith Holmes, Denny & Phil Moyer, scoring.

Oct. 1999 (92-Page Special): Felix & Oscar Go To War! Who's Going To Prevail In The Welter Shootout? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Harry Simon, Omar Sheika, Al Andrews, 20 greatest fighters of 20th century.

Dec. 1999: Insiders' Analysis: Can Roy Jones Chop Down The Best Heavyweights? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, David Reid, David Tua, Carmen Basilio, Johnny Summerlin.

Holiday 1999 (92-Page Special): Heavyweight Showdowns! Holyfield vs. Lewis II, Grant vs. Golota. Plus: Francois Botha, Arturo Gatti, Michael Carbajal, Rocky Marciano, Lou Filippo.

Jan. 2000: What Does Trinidad's Victory Over Oscar Mean? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Paul Spadafora, Ralph Dupas, boxing media.

March 2000: Lennox Lewis: The Champ For The Millennium ... Or Just For The Moment? Plus: Oleg Maskaev, Main Events, Derrick Jefferson, Jerry Buss, IBF scandal.

April 2000 (92-Page Special): Paulie Ayala—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Grant-Golota, Stephan Johnson, Gaspar Ortega, Kitten Hayward, writers' favorite fights.

May 2000: Lennox Lewis Will Quit ... Or Get Knocked Out, By Michael Grant. Plus: Roy Jones, Quartey-Vargas preview, Garth Panter, best chins, boxing movies.

June 2000: The Honors Keep Coming! Lenox Lewis Receives The Undisputed Ring Belt. Plus: Roy Jones, Vernon Forrest, Teddy Atlas, Mike Tyson, Don Fullmer.

July 2000 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Zab Judah, Oscar De La Hoya, Barrera-Morales, Ken Buchanan, Beau Jack, Eric Bottjer.

Aug. 2000: Hamed! And The Men Who Want To Kick His Naz! Plus: David Reid, James Prince, Anthony Fletcher, Micky Ward, final beatings, white hopes.

Sept. 2000: A New Look At Lennox Lewis: Is He An All-Time Great? Plus: Winky Wright, Michael Moorer, De La Hoya & Vargas, Eddie McGoorty.

Oct. 2000 (92-Page Special): Move Up Or Shut Up! We're Sick Of Roy Jones' Heavyweight Tease. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Tapia & Romero, Hasim Rahman, Dwight Qawi, Al Palzer, fight films, best refs.

(ALL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH THE DECEMBER 2000 ISSUE)

Dec. 2000: The Hell With Tyson—Tua Is The Man Who Could Beat Lewis. Plus: Mike Tyson, Felix Trinidad, Wladimir Klitschko, Trilla in Manila, U.S. vs. World, Toxey Hall.

Jan. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Trinidad's Destiny: Jones Is On His Mind ... But Vargas Is In His Face! Plus: Naseem Hamed, Tszyu-Judah, Evander Holyfield, Willie Bean, 20 greatest middleweights.

Feb. 2001: It's Not Over For Oscar: The Ring's Five-Step Recovery Plan. Plus: Bob Arum, Dingaan Thobela, Hernandez brothers, U.S. Olympic team, future pound-for-pounders.

March 2001 (108-Page Extra): Tyson! Forget About Retirement ... A Title Shot Awaits! Plus: Ayala-Tapia II, Audley Harrison, Chris Byrd, Kirk Johnson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Boone Kirkman, 12 most exciting rounds.

April 2001: A New Beginning ... A New Middle: Felix Trinidad Is Ready To Conquer Another Division! Plus: Shane Mosley, Lennox Lewis, Paul Andrews, boxing business.

May 2001 (108-Page Extra): Felix Trinidad—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Barrera-Hamed preview, Bernard Hopkins, Joey Archer.

June 2001: Pretty Boy Floyd: Superstar Or Superbrat? Plus: Lewis vs. greats, 2000 Olympians, Henry Hall, rematches we'd like to see.

July 2001 (108-Page Extra): The State Of The Game. Plus: Zab Judah, John Ruiz, Andrew Lewis, Mark Johnson, British boxing.

Aug. 2001: Rocking The World! What Rahman's Victory Means To Boxing. Plus: Barrera-Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Mount Whitaker, *Friday Night Fights.*

Sept. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive Ring Interview—Hasim Rahman: "Nobody's Taking My Titles!" Plus: 20 all-time greatest lightweights, Pat Valentino, Hopkins & King, Jones & Arum.

Oct. 2001: Trinidad vs. Hopkins: Middleweight Unification Superfight Analysis & Predictions. Plus: Emanuel Steward, Joe Calzaghe, Ali's opponents, Rahman & King.

Dec. 2001: The Rock Promises Another Shock! "I'm Gonna Knock Lennox Out Again!" Plus: David Reid, Jones-Gonzalez, McCline-Grant, Jackie Graves, ring deaths.

Jan. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Oscar Feeds His Critics: Did He Chicken Out Against Vargas? Plus: Wladimir Klitschko, Chris Byrd, 20 greatest featherweights, "Caveman" Bob Moha.

March 2002 (108-Page Extra): Is Tyson Ready To Regain The Title? Plus: Kostya Tszyu, Floyd Mayweather, Bernard Hopkins, Eddie Futch, fitness, ahead for 2002.

May 2002 (108-Page Extra): Bernard Hopkins—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Holyfield-Ruiz III, 2000 Olympians, Eric Harding, "Silent" Hairston.

June 2002: Lennox Lewis: I'll End The Tyson "Freak Show!" Plus: Forrest-Mosley, Freitas-Casamayor, De La Hoya & Vargas, Hagler & Leonard.

July 2002 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive Preview: The Oscar-Fernando Hatefest. Plus: Hopkins & Monzon, Francisco Bojado, Buddy McGirt, Lionel Rose, State of the Game.

Aug. 2002: Lewis vs. Tyson: Who Will Win ... And What Happens Next. Plus: Michael Moorer, Jeff Fenech, Charley Parham, Rafael & Juan Manuel Marquez.

Sept. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Vernon Forrest—Next Step In The Master Plan: End Mosley's Career. Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Roberto Duran, Ricardo Mayorga, 20 greatest lightweights.

Oct. 2002: Tito' Back ... And He's "Going To Make Hopkins Pay!" Plus: Ward-Gatti, Bouie Fisher, controversial scoring, ruining prospects.

Nov. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Monster Mashed! Can A New Tyson Emerge From The Rubble? Plus: The Ring 100, Evander Holyfield, Don King, Billy Joiner, junior welters.

Dec. 2002: Ward & Gatti Look To Hit Another Grand Slam! Plus: Forrest-Mosley II, Barrera-Morales II, Manny Pacquiao, Tim Austin, Nino Benvenuti, Mark Taffet.

Jan. 2003 (108-Page Extra): The Golden Boy Proves His Manhood: Is Oscar De La Hoya' Prime Just Beginning? Plus: Michael Grant, David Tua, previews of Morales-Ayala and Ward-Gatti II, overrated/underrated.

Feb. 2003: The Resurrection Of A Warrior: Cam Evander Holyfield Recapture The Glory Of His Youth? Also: Floyd Mayweather Sr., Nate Campbell, Tom & Peter McNeeley, boxing finances, pound-for-pound.

March 2003 (108-Page Extra): Hamed ... Morales ... Tapia: Barrera Has Punched His Ticket To The Hall Of Fame. Also: Joe Mesi, Ricardo Lopez, Pipino Cuevas, alphabet tales, what's ahead for '03.

April 2003: Gatti Has His Ducks In A Row: A New Woman And A New Trainer Put The "Art" Back In Arturo. *Also: Barrera-Morales, Roy Jones, Phillip Ndou & Silence Mabuza, Laila Ali, Gorilla Jones,*

May 2003 (108-Page Extra): All ... Leonard ... Tyson ... Klitschko? Also: Year-end awards, Chris Byrd, Lupe Pintor, Maxie Rosenbloom.

June 2003: Exclusive! The Ring Grills George Foreman. Also: Kostya Tszyu, Ricardo Mayorga, Diego Corrales, Tommy Loughran.

July 2003 (108-Page Extra): Now What, Roy? How Jones Matches Up Against The Heavyweight Elite. Also: Mike Tyson, Marquez Brothers, Ricardo Williams, Tony Zale.

Aug. 2003: The Ring Unscrambles The Heavyweight Mess. Also: Bernard Hopkins, Scott Harrison, Billy Warren, Latino revolution, cups.

Sept. 2003 (108-Page Extra): Oscar At 30: Forget About Retirement ... He Has Revenge On His Mind. Also: Mayorga-Forrest II preview, James Toney, Barney Ross, HBO, report cards.

Oct. 2003: James Toney vs. Bernard Hopkins: The Ghost Of Superfights Past. Also: De La Hoya-Mosley II preview, Jermain Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, biggest hearts.

Nov. 2003 (108-Page Extra): Healing And Hungry: Vitali Klitschko—Is He The Man To Retire Lewis? Also: Gatti-Ward III, Holyfield-Toney, Dominick Guinn, Lee Roy Murphy, The Ring 100.

Dec. 2003: The Craziest Man In The Sport: Mayorga Lights Up Boxing. Also: Oscar De La Hoya, Fernando Vargas, Manuel Medina, Curtis Cokes, Rasheem Brown.

Jan. 2004 (108-Page Extra): Shane-Oscar II: The 10 Questions You Want Answered! Also: Laila Ali, Mark Johnson, Jimmy McClarnin, The Ring championship, broke boxers, division-by-division analysis.

Feb. '04: James Toney Told You So! "Lights Out" Is A Heavyweight Force. Also: Mosley-De La Hoya II, CompuBox, Yaqui Lopez, Ishme Smith.

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☐ Feb/83	☐ Jan/86	☐ Jan/89	☐ May/92	All 3 $14	☐ May/00	☐ Sep/02
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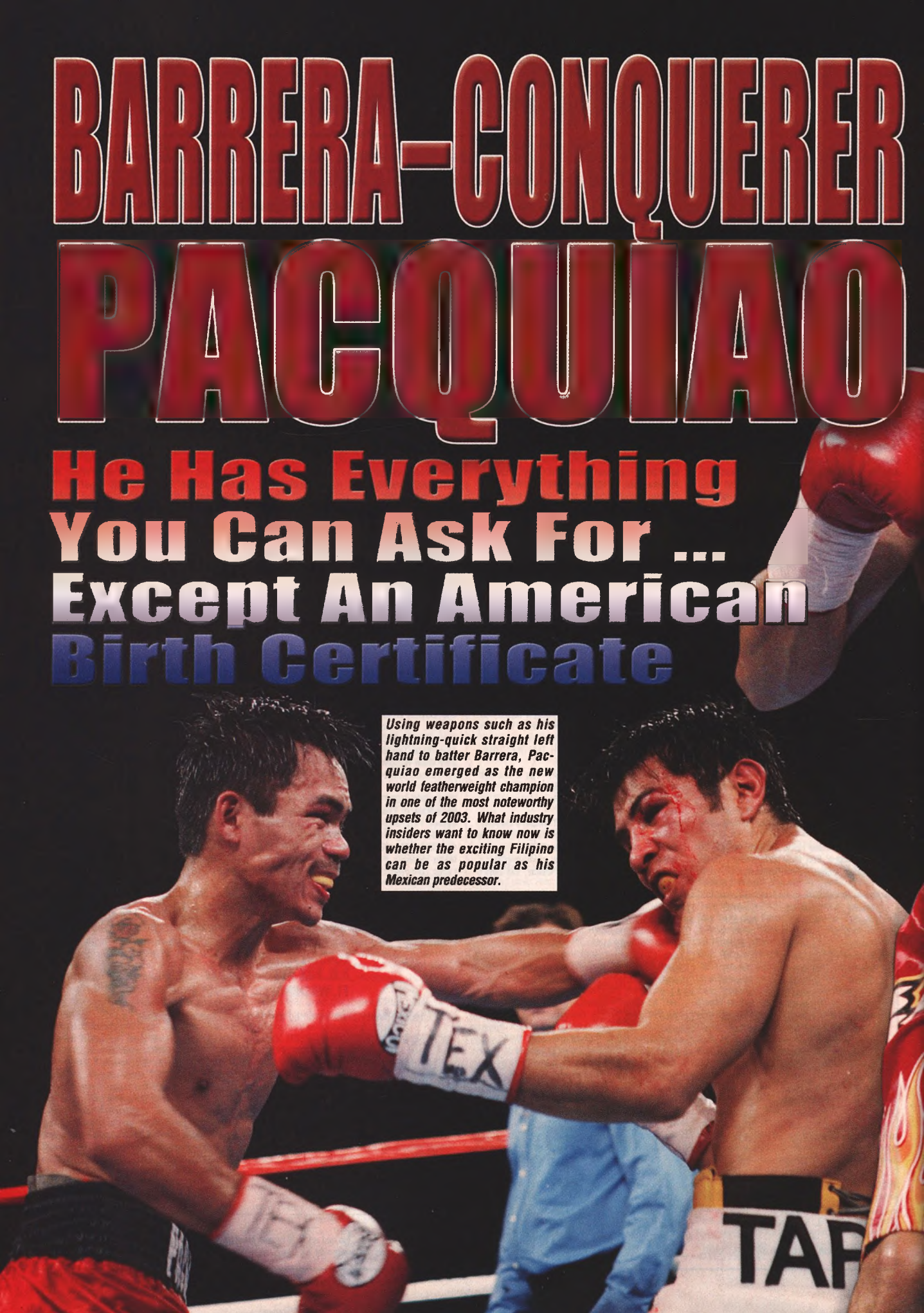
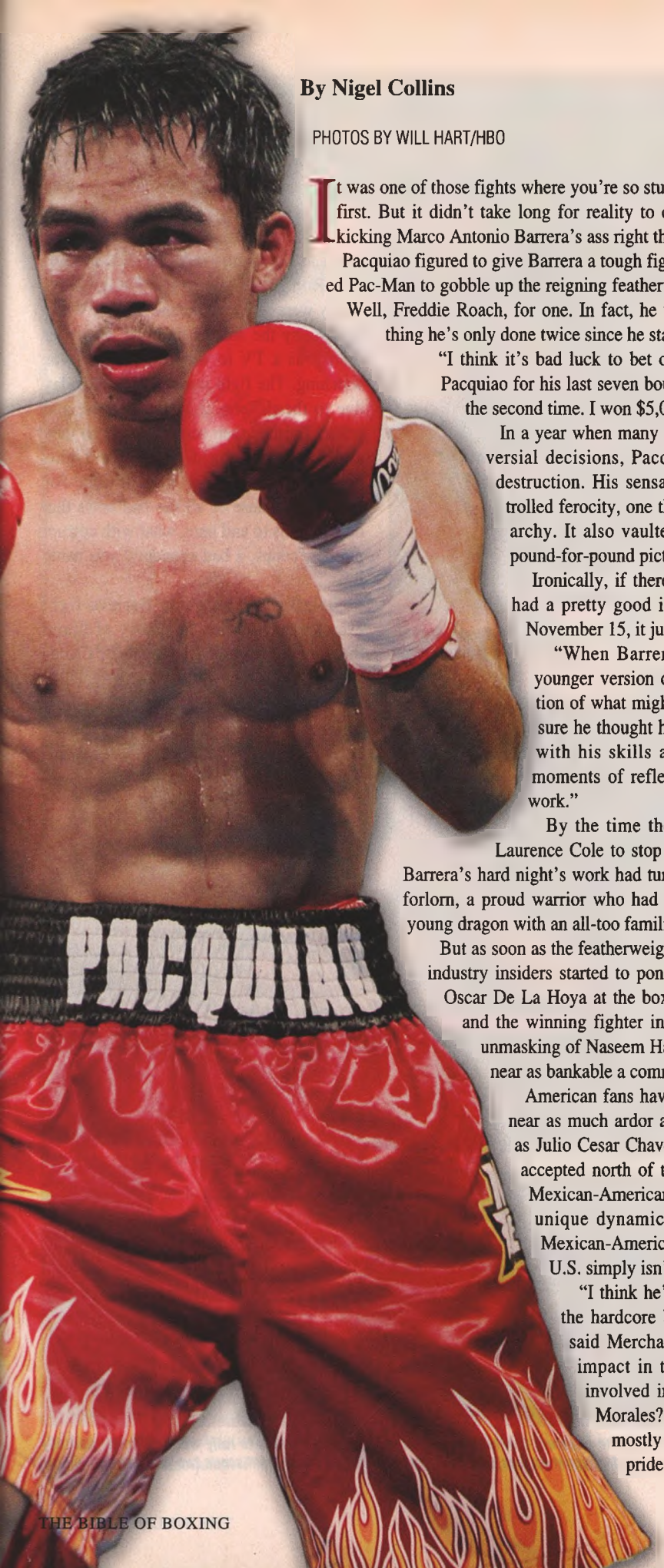
BARRERA-CONQUERER PACQUIAO

He Has Everything You Can Ask For ... Except An American Birth Certificate



Using weapons such as his lightning-quick straight left hand to batter Barrera, Pacquiao emerged as the new world featherweight champion in one of the most noteworthy upsets of 2003. What industry insiders want to know now is whether the exciting Filipino can be as popular as his Mexican predecessor.



By Nigel Collins

PHOTOS BY WILL HART/HBO

It was one of those fights where you're so stunned by what you're seeing that it doesn't register at first. But it didn't take long for reality to cut through the incongruity—Manny Pacquiao was kicking Marco Antonio Barrera's ass right there on HBO for the entire world to see.

Pacquiao figured to give Barrera a tough fight, maybe a *very* tough fight. But how many expected Pac-Man to gobble up the reigning featherweight champion like he was a bag of tortilla chips? Well, Freddie Roach, for one. In fact, he was so sure Pacquiao would win that he did something he's only done twice since he started training fighters in the late-1980s.

"I think it's bad luck to bet on your own fighter," said Roach, who has trained Pacquiao for his last seven bouts. "I've only done it twice in my life, and this was the second time. I won $5,000 by betting Manny by knockout."

In a year when many of the biggest fights were decided by close, controversial decisions, Pacquiao provided the perfect antidote: a one-sided destruction. His sensational upset was a mind-blowing display of controlled ferocity, one that scrambled both Barrera and the 126-pound hierarchy. It also vaulted the Filipino dynamo into the midst of today's pound-for-pound picture.

Ironically, if there was one person outside of Pacquiao's camp who had a pretty good idea of what was going to happen the evening of November 15, it just might have been Barrera himself.

"When Barrera said to us the before the fight that he sees a younger version of himself in Pacquiao, it was almost like a prediction of what might happen," said HBO analyst Larry Merchant. "I'm sure he thought he'd be able to neutralize Pacquiao's speed and fury with his skills and punching power, but obviously, in his own moments of reflection, Barrera knew he was in for a hard night's work."

By the time the defending champion's corner signaled referee Laurence Cole to stop the fight in the closing seconds of the 11th round, Barrera's hard night's work had turned into a nightmare. He was bloody, swollen, and forlorn, a proud warrior who had suddenly found himself helpless at the hands of a young dragon with an all-too familiar look of hunger in his eyes.

But as soon as the featherweight crown had been passed from one head to another, industry insiders started to ponder exactly what Pacquiao had wrought. While no Oscar De La Hoya at the box office, Barrera has been an HBO staple for years and the winning fighter in the richest fight in featherweight history, his '01 unmasking of Naseem Hamed. Was the new champion going to be anywhere near as bankable a commodity?

American fans have seldom embraced foreign fighters with anywhere near as much ardor as they have homegrown talent. Mexican stars such as Julio Cesar Chavez and to a lesser degree Barrera have been widely accepted north of the border, but that's due to massive support from Mexican-Americans. Manila is a long way from Mexico City, and the unique dynamic that has made the Latino audience, especially Mexican-Americans, the most important boxing demographic in the U.S. simply isn't in effect where Pacquiao is concerned.

"I think he'll break through with boxing fans, but maybe only the hardcore boxing fans. I don't think it can go beyond that," said Merchant of Pacquiao's chances of making a significant impact in this country. "Is it conceivable that he could be involved in a pay-per-view fight against somebody like Erik Morales? Yes, but he has his limits. People root for fighters mostly based on either nationalism or regionalism or ethnic pride. That has stood the test of time except for a handful

The heavy-handed Pacquiao dished out a severe beating and had the usually brave Barrera looking for a way out as early as the seventh round. After winning titles at flyweight and junior feather, Pac-Man looked better than ever at 126 pounds against Barrera.

of foreign guys who became major attractions."

While the boxing establishment pondered how best to market the new featherweight champion, Filipinos were reveling in Pacquiao's triumph.

"Just about everybody in the country watched the fight," reported Ted Lerner, THE RING's Philippines correspondent. "They were gathered around small TV sets in bars, by the side of the road, wherever there was a TV to watch, everyone was watching. The fight was seen here Sunday due to the difference in time zones, and priests finished their sermons early so they and everyone could watch the fight. Manny's win was a huge boost for Filipinos because of all the bad news that never seems to end here, what with corrupt politics, coups, a bad economy, you name it."

Briefly, the Pacquiao-Barrera fight even helped improve the quality of life in the winner's troubled homeland. "Crimi-

Barrera was game, especially in the early rounds before it became apparent that he was outgunned. But his attempts to rally were all futile, partially because of Pacquiao's improved defense. Pac-Man is not the crude slugger he was when he burst onto the American fight scene two years ago.

Trainer Freddie Roach confidently sends Pacquiao into battle. Roach, who made an extra $5,000 betting on Pac-Man to win by knockout, has been working with the Filipino since June 2001.

nals Stop To Watch Pacquiao," screamed the headline in *The Manila Times*. "Reports at the Philippine National Police Headquarters indicated the incidents of crime that occurred that day dropped significantly compared with statistics from previous weekends," read the article.

There's no way, of course, that Pacquiao will ever cause that kind of a stir in America. But if any of today's overseas fighters can win the adulation of U.S. fans, it just might be Pacquiao. Forget the hostile reception he got from the crowd of 10,127 at the Alamodome. San Antonio is less than 100 miles from the Texas-Mexico border, deep in the heart of Barrera country where rooting against a Mexican national is tantamount to treason.

Purely from a spectator's point of view, Pacquiao has just about everything a fan could ask for. He's relentlessly aggressive, lightning quick ("He moves like Bruce Lee," gushed Roach), and has knockout power in both fists. He's equally appealing

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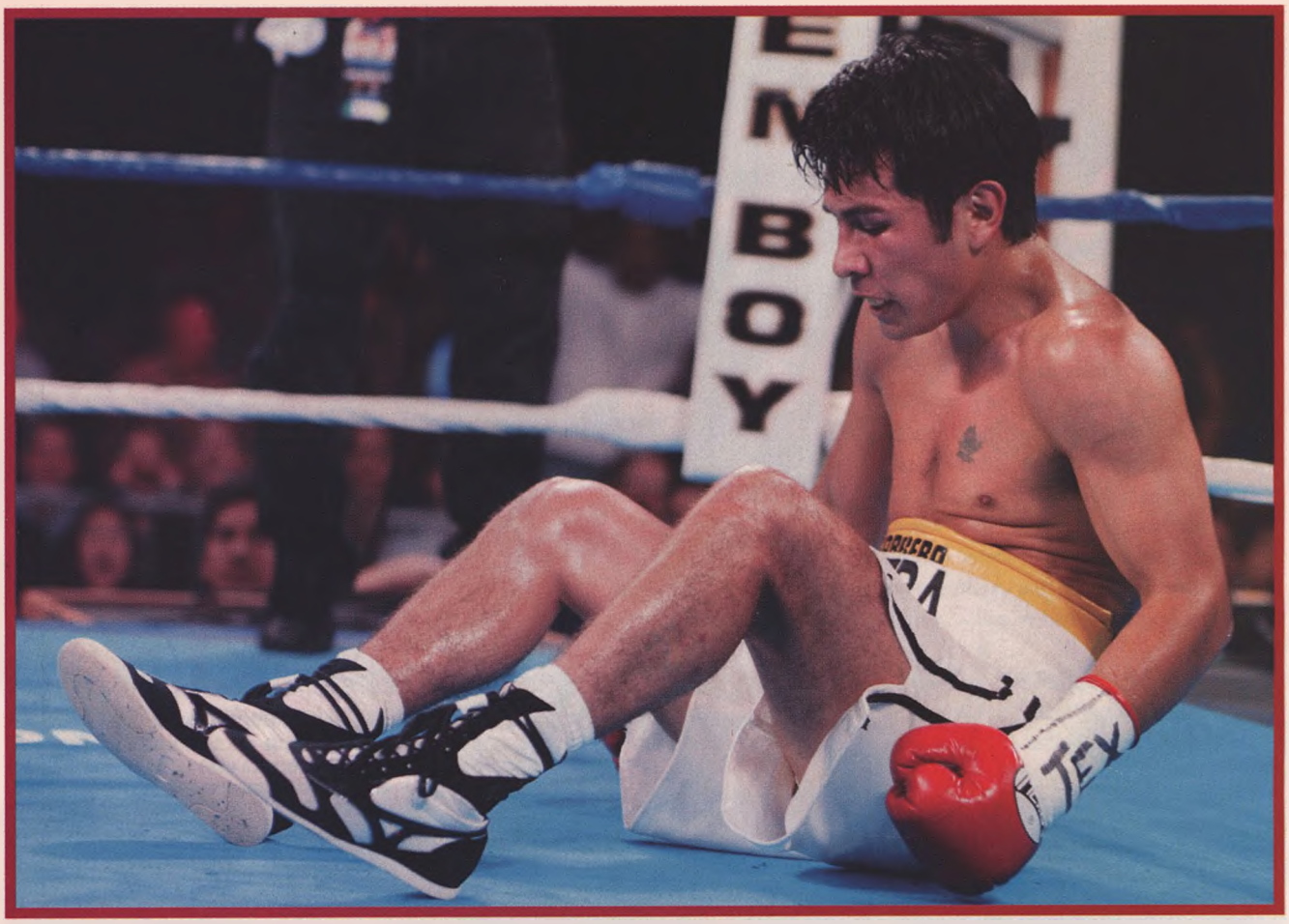


Barrera, who hadn't been on the canvas since his 1996 loss to Junior Jones, was floored in both the third and the 11th, and his sixth-round tumble could have been ruled a knockdown as well. He kept getting up until his corner wisely stopped the fight late in round 11.

outside of the ring, where his mischievous smile and boyish enthusiasm seem to belie his assassin-like approach to his calling.

"There's a certain kind of sunshine that emanates from him that suggests he loves the spotlight and loves what he's doing," agreed Merchant. "That's kind of rare."

The gleeful way Pacquiao goes about his brutal trade is contagious, and it's easy to fall in love with the way he goes for the knockout every time out. There's no half-stepping for Pac-Man, a distinction conspicuously lacking among many of today's top fighters.

"By way of comparison, it's interesting to look back at two other fighters who didn't quite break through," noted Merchant. "While Antonio Tarver fought a beautifully crafted and executed game plan against Roy Jones, he couldn't quite seize the moment. And when Winky Wright had his moment against Fernando Vargas, he couldn't quite put it over. Neither Tarver nor Wright was willing to be reckless. Pacquiao had the initiative and nerve to go for it."

While a fighter's ability to totally commit to the moment is a special quality, thanks to Roach, Pacquiao is no longer the same damn-the-consequences slugger who had won and lost the WBC flyweight title by the time he was 20 years old.

"I think the biggest improvement has been his head movement and defense," said Roach. "He's always been very explosive and a quick puncher, but he stood in front of you a little too much. And of course, his confidence is growing also."

Back home in the Philippines, where he's already starred in a couple of movies, the 5'6" Pacquiao is a Michael Jordan-sized icon, hounded by politicians and paparazzi alike. Everybody wants a piece of him, sometimes literally, and he is forced to employ six bodyguards to protect him and his family from kidnappers and terrorists. But the moment he steps off the plane in Los Angeles, where he trains at Roach's Wildcard Gym, Pacquiao's lifestyle undergoes a radical change.

"He still lives at the Vagabond Motel right next to the gym," said Roach. "It's not in the best area of Hollywood, but he's comfortable there and he likes it. I put him in the Oakwood Apartments one time, but it was too nice. He didn't like it."

Roach, who also trains James Toney, has seen his share of outstanding fighters, and clearly believes that Pacquiao is destined for further greatness. "He's getting better every day," said Roach.

Although there's no other featherweight around with Barrera's cachet, there are still attractive fights to be made. Juan Manuel Marquez, THE RING's number-one contender at 126 pounds, was mentioned as a possible future opponent during the broadcast. HBO might also be interested in Pacquiao vs. Oscar Larios, THE RING's number-one junior feather. And providing he continues to progress, Rocky Juarez, a former American Olympian with a growing following, would make a very appeal-

ing challenger a year or so from now.

Moreover, the week following the Pacquiao-Barrera fight, Morales, now campaigning as a junior lightweight, said that he would be willing to meet Pacquiao at a catch weight.

"We'd definitely consider Morales," said Roach. "Manny weighed 125 for Barrera, but went into the ring at 136."

It's impossible at this juncture to know exactly how far Pacquiao's swashbuckling style can take him, but sometimes we can glimpse the future by looking back at history.

Once upon a time, on June 18, 1923, to be precise, a couple of foreign pugs, Jimmy Wilde and Pancho Villa, attracted approximately 40,000 fans to the Polo Grounds for a flyweight championship fight. Villa, one of only two Filipinos enshrined in the International Boxing Hall of Fame, stopped Wilde in the seventh round to win the title. Those days are gone forever, but if matched properly, the 24-year-old Pacquiao could easily surpass those figures with the benefit of PPV. And if he beats all of the opponents proposed above, and maybe a few others besides, he might also one day join his countrymen, Villa and Flash Elorde, in Canastota.

On the other hand, Pac-Man is still a bit of a wild child, and Filipino sluggers tend to flame out early. Villa was dead by the time he was Pacquiao's age.

Yes, the charismatic little gunslinger still has a long way to go, but whatever the immediate future holds for him, two things are for sure: It's going to be fun to watch, and Roach had better be content with the five grand he won, because it's going to be a while before Pacquiao is an underdog again. ■

PAC ATTACK BARRELS OVER BARRERA

A grinning Manny Pacquiao oozed confidence as he bounced down the aisle toward the ring to the sounds of boos, blowing kisses to the unfriendly fans as he went. But Marco Antonio Barrera's faithful followers couldn't help their hero once the first bell sounded, and after almost 11 rounds of rapid-fire action, Pacquiao had silenced the crowd and handed Barrera the worst beating of his 61-bout career.

Barrera, 126, Mexico City, got off to a more aggressive start than expected, but Pacquiao, 125, General Santos City, Philippines, stayed right with him and gave as good as he got, maybe better. Then as the round approached the 2:30 mark, Pacquiao tripped over one of his rival's feet and fell. Referee Laurence Cole (USA) ruled it was a knockdown, but replays clearly showed otherwise.

Undaunted, the challenger was right back on the attack in the second, brushing aside Barrera's jabs and scoring to the head and body. Barrera's left eye was already showing signs of Pacquiao's abuse by the end of the round, but things were about to get much worse for the defending champion.

A straight left, flush on the chin, floored Barrera early in the third. He sat there for a second or two, seemingly pondering his fate, but was up at the count of seven. Pacquiao went for the finish and smashed home a number of searing shots before getting a bit gassed and easing up as the round drew to a close.

Pacquiao continued to dominate in the fourth and fifth, ramming straight shots through Barrera's guard and lashing his ribs with hooks. He was much quicker, and made good use of his upper body movement to avoid many of Barrera's offerings.

Freddie Roach urged Pacquiao to get "a little busier," and Pac-Man started the sixth with a wicked combination. Later in the round, a left put Barrera down again, but Cole ruled it was a slip.

An accidental clash of heads opened a cut over Barrera's left eye in the seventh. He looked thoroughly dejected and seemed to be angling for a DQ win or some sort of technical decision, but Cole asked the doctor if Barrera was able to continue, and when the medic said he could, action resumed.

Barrera, 29, tried to rally in the eighth, but Pacquiao continued to outpunch him. Things only got worse for the rapidly fading and frustrated Mexican in the ninth when Cole docked him a point for hitting on the break.

Pacquiao, just as energetic as he had been at the start, continued to belabor Barrera, who by the 10th round seemed in survival mode. But Pacquiao was taking no chances, and really unloaded in the 11th, decking the weary Barrera for another count with a sizzling combination. Although Barrera gamely regained his feet again, when Pacquiao pinned him on the ropes and hammered away with impunity, one of Barrera's handlers climbed onto the apron and forced Cole to call a halt four seconds before the end of the round.

"I was surprised he lasted so long," said Pacquiao, 38-2-1 (29), "because very early I knew I was going to knock him out."

"There's no excuse," said Barrera, 57-4 (40). "I respect Manny Pacquiao. He's the true champion."

Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions

(11-15-03)

–NC

Pac-Man clips Barrera with a southpaw right hook

MAYWEATHER VS. THE ALL-TIME GREATS

Where Does "Pretty Boy" Floyd Rank Among The Lightweight Legends?

By William Dettloff

It's hard to find fault with much of what world lightweight champion Floyd Mayweather has done in the ring over the course of his career. If you wanted to nitpick you could say he's never been very exciting, but that wouldn't be entirely true—he was sensational taking apart the respected and vastly more experienced Genaro Hernandez for the WBC super featherweight title in 1998, and just as electrifying overwhelming power-punching contender Phillip Ndou in his most recent fight. You could say he left 130 pounds too quickly, but he'd made eight defenses, five by knockout, destroyed Diego Corrales, and did anyone really think Acelino Freitas or Joel Casamayor would have beaten him?

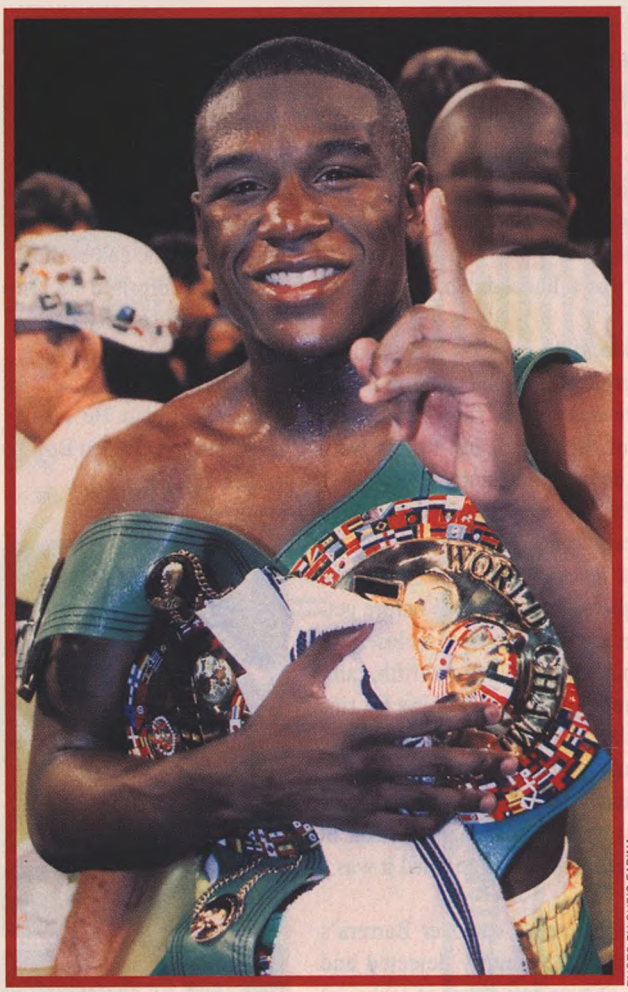


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

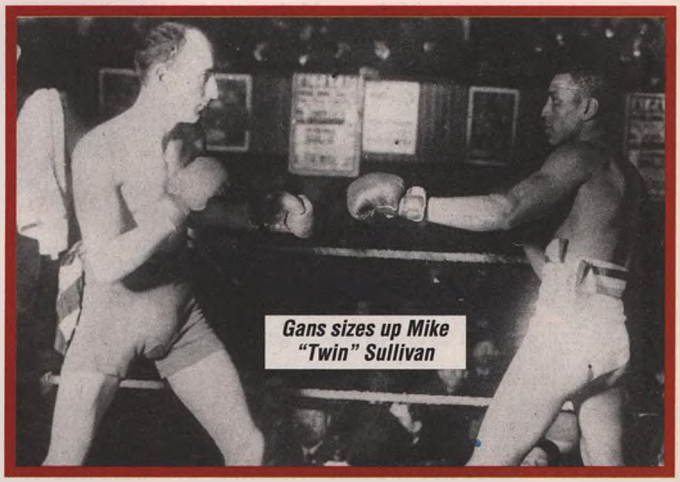
It wouldn't be inaccurate to say that on the whole Mayweather hasn't been quite as impressive at 135 as he was at 130, but his record speaks for itself: two wins over the highly regarded Jose Luis Castillo (even if the first one was a little too close for comfort), a lopsided decision win over bomb-throwing Victoriano Sosa, then the destruction of Ndou. He's undefeated, one of the best fighters in the world pound-for-pound, and, outside of the first Castillo fight, he's never been pushed very hard.

This is a good time to match Mayweather, 31-0 (21), against some of history's best lightweights—by now we know some things about him that are conducive to this type of exercise: We know that if you're tall, not especially nimble, and live only to rack up knockouts, Mayweather has your number. We know he's a solid puncher, but he won't stop anybody with one or two shots. We know he has bad hands and that he can be out-muscled and out-worked sometimes by shorter, stronger guys who can go well to the body. And we know that if he can back you up, you're lost. All of it has made him the best of today's lightweights. To find out how he measures up against the all-time greats, read on.

JOE GANS

120-8-9 (85) with 18 no-decisions

World Champion 1902-'04, '06-'08


Gans sizes up Mike "Twin" Sullivan

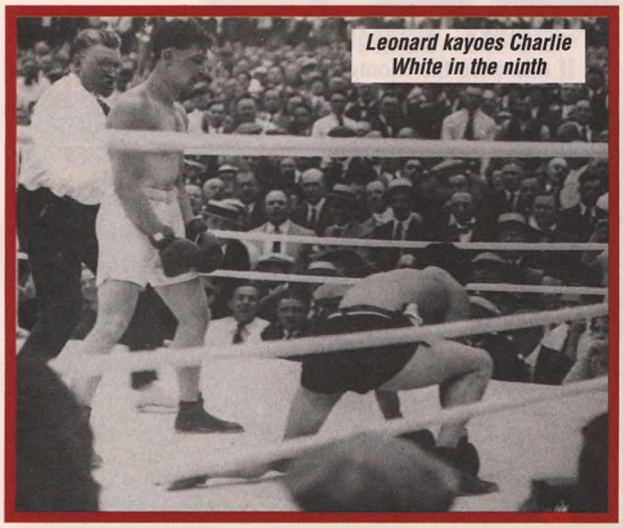
Historians remember Gans mainly as a classy, box-and-move counterpuncher, and compared to the guys he fought around the turn of the century, that's what he was. But look again at his record—he scored 85 knockouts in 155 fights. That's a 55 percent kayo rate, which is very high when you consider the frequency with which no-decisions were rendered during that era. What does it prove? That Gans was a puncher. When he had to, he wore guys down with a style that for the time was highly evolved. But when he could, which was a lot of the time, he blasted guys out of there.

Unfortunately for Gans, Mayweather is light years more skilled than were most of the guys Gans was slapping around. Gans would figure this out early on, abandon any hope of trying to counter or outbox Mayweather, and turn to his punch. He'd press Mayweather, back him up and try to land the bomb. We know what Mayweather does to guys who do that. Mayweather by late kayo or unanimous decision.

BENNY LEONARD

85-5-1 (69) with 119 no-decisions

World Champion 1917-'23


Leonard kayoes Charlie White in the ninth

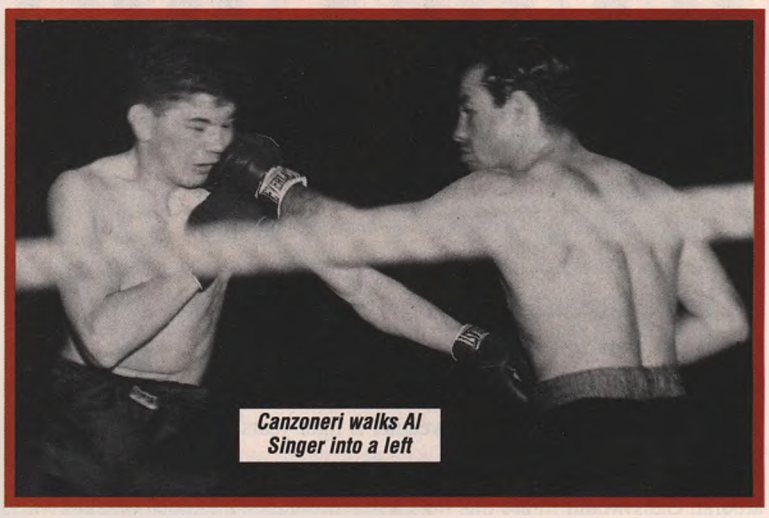
It's easy to discount the chances of a guy like Leonard, whose greatness today must in the main be trusted, since it cannot, with any clarity at least, be witnessed. We have to rely on reports and opinions written 80 years ago. We see Mayweather, on the other hand, as he is. We do have one important tool, however: records. Leonard's is revealing: Of his five career losses, three came during the first eight months of his career. Another came in his very last fight, the kayo loss to Jimmy McLarnin when Leonard was shot. The other was a disqualification against Jack Britton. So during the bulk of his career, from May 1912 to September '32, Leonard wasn't kayoed or decisioned once. That doesn't happen by accident.

Leonard could bang a bit, but as his 33 percent kayo rate suggests, he wasn't a huge puncher. Mayweather would count on this and he'd take the fight to the smaller Leonard, going right inside, like he did against Emanuel Burton. What he'd find upon getting there is a guy who could step around him and counter him with precision, who could bust off a good hard combination then get back outside. He'd find a guy who was fast and hard to hit and crafty. In short, he'd find a guy who could do it just a little better than he could. Leonard by close decision.

TONY CANZONERI

137-24-10 (44) with 4 no-decisions

World Champion 1930-'33, '35-'36



Canzoneri walks Al Singer into a left

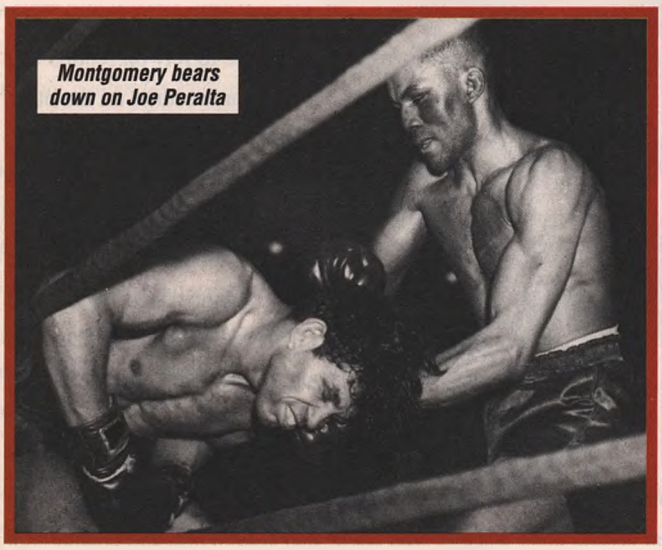
Canzoneri is another of those old-timers who looks especially small, underpowered, and unskilled when you see him on film. His 25 percent knockout rate tells you all you need to know about the kind of puncher he was (despite his famous one-punch stoppage of Jackie "Kid" Berg) and his losses to the slicker and more celebrated Barney Ross are troubling when you consider that Ross probably wasn't as fast as is Mayweather.

That said, we like Canzoneri—big. He was relentless, he never stopped punching, and you couldn't discourage him. If Mayweather found Jose Luis Castillo difficult, especially in their first fight, guess what: Castillo is no Canzoneri. He'd be in Mayweather's face from bell to bell, every minute of the round, and all night long. And forget about Mayweather hurting him; Canzoneri was stopped just once in 175 fights, that by the murderous-hooking Al "Bummy" Davis in Canzoneri's last fight. Canzoneri by commanding decision.

BOB MONTGOMERY

75-19-3 (37)

New York World Titleholder 1943, '44-'47



Montgomery bears down on Joe Peralta

If this were the Montgomery who lost his last six fights after Ike Williams knocked him out in 1947 in their second fight, we'd take Mayweather in a walkover. Montgomery was shot by then. But we're talking about the guy who stopped Williams in 12 in their first fight, and who split four bouts with Beau Jack. That Montgomery was a different guy. Still, he would have problems with Mayweather's style.

Montgomery was a fast-handed, aggressive guy who threw a lot of punches, but could be frustrated and outmaneuvered by good defensive fighters who could move in and out and tie him up when they wanted to. Against the slickest guys—Sammy Angott, for example, who outpointed him three times in three chances—he had trouble getting off. But Mayweather isn't quite as tricky as Angott was, even if he might be a better fighter overall. The sense here is that Montgomery would fall behind early—he was a slow starter throughout his career—then come on late to outhustle Mayweather and grind out a close decision win.

BEAU JACK

83-24-5 (40) with 1 no-decision

New York World Titleholder 1942-'43, '43-'44

Jack whacks Tony Janiro with a right

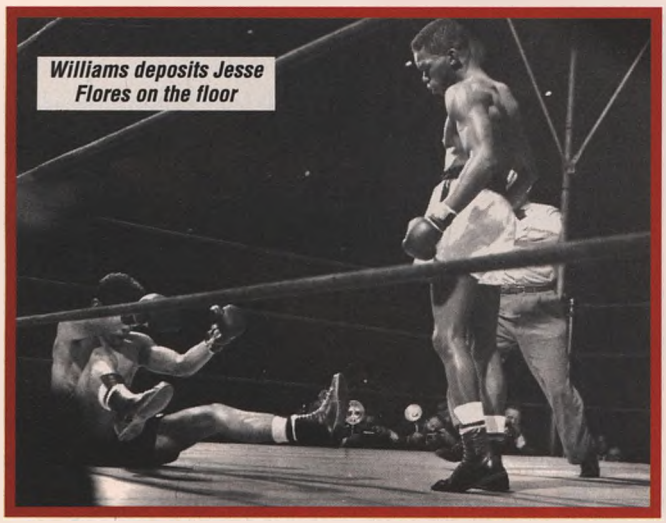
One way to beat a guy like Mayweather is with unceasing pressure. It's hard for a slick guy like Mayweather to execute all those moves he does if a guy is in his chest. More to the point, if a guy is in his chest, the moves are worthless. Getting in a guy's chest is what Jack was all about. That's what he did. It was all pressure and non-stop punches and brute strength. That's what got him more main event fights at Madison Square Garden than any fighter in history, including Joe Louis.

If you were going to beat Jack, you had to be stronger and tougher than he was—that's why Jack couldn't do anything with Ike Williams—and it would help if you could back him up once in a while. Mayweather isn't stronger than Jack was, he isn't tougher, and he couldn't make Jack back up if he hit him with the ring stool. This one isn't hard: Jack by lopsided decision.

IKE WILLIAMS

125-24-5 (60)

NBA Titleholder 1945-'47; World Champion 1947-'51


Williams deposits Jesse Flores on the floor

The temptation here is to look at Williams' considerable height—5'9½"—and his heavy hands, label him a tall, aggressive puncher, like, say, Diego Corrales or Phillip Ndou, and take Mayweather in a walkover. The problem with that is Williams was no one-dimensional banger; he was fast, he had a telephone pole of a left jab that he used to good effect, he could go to the body like no one's business, and he was a monster of a lightweight. He was bigger than Mayweather, stronger, and a mechanically sound fighter.

Williams often did his best against guys who went to him. Clearly Mayweather wouldn't do that—Williams was too strong for him. Pretty Boy could only hope to outbox him, and Williams could be outboxed—a lot of guys did just that. But the sense here is that Williams' size, skills, strength, and tenacity would overcome Mayweather's greater fluidity and style. He'd take a unanimous decision in a hard fought, close, exciting battle.

JOE BROWN

104-43-13 (47) with 1 no-contest

World Champion 1956-'62

Armand Savoie reels from a Brown right hand

Brown didn't have the best weapons ever and that he lasted as long as he did as champion—12 title defenses over six years—is testament to his craftiness, his resourcefulness, and his versatility. He was a sneaky, slippery guy who ate it up when guys came to him and he could run them into his right hand. He made you think you could go right through him, so that's how everyone fought him. Carlos Ortiz made an admittedly faded Brown punch first in their match in April 1962, and abruptly, Brown was an ex-champion.

Mayweather vs. Brown would not have been very exciting. Brown would lie outside, poking jabs at Mayweather, inviting him in. Mayweather, a smart fighter, would take the bait only sporadically, using his greater speed to leap in and score with overhand rights. Otherwise he'd be content to sit outside and outmaneuver and outscore "Old Bones" on the way to winning a unanimous decision.

CARLOS ORTIZ

61-7-1 (30) with 1 no-contest

World Champion 1962-'65, '65-'68

Ortiz employs his jab against Kenny Lane

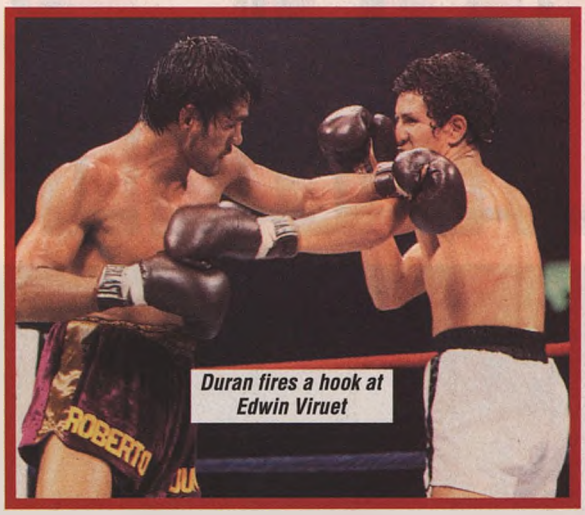
It wasn't enough that Ortiz was a superbly skilled, mechanically near-perfect fighter who could punch with both hands, take a guy apart to the body, and go all night when he had to. He also was smart. He knew when he could take his man out with power, and when he had to box. Boxing was how he beat Joe Brown for the title and how he won it back from Ismael Laguna. He liked fighting better, but he boxed when it made sense, and that's what he'd do against Mayweather.

This isn't to say Ortiz could just sit outside and outjab Mayweather, who's an outstanding boxer; it is to say that he'd mix it up enough so that Mayweather wouldn't know how to counter. Ortiz would go after Mayweather when it was right and hurt him to the body, and sometimes he'd jab outside and make Mayweather come to him. He was technically brilliant most nights and too complete for Mayweather to handle. Ortiz in 10.

ROBERTO DURAN

104-16 (69)

WBA Titleholder 1972-'78; World Champion 1978



Duran fires a hook at Edwin Viruet

Before anything else, forget Duran's troubles with Sugar Ray Leonard, and with Wilfred Benitez, too; they didn't fight him at 135, where Duran was as close to being perfect as a fighter could be. He was superb there—a highly skilled killer who from all indications would rather fight than breathe. He wasn't without weakness: You could hit him with the hook if you had a good, quick one—Esteban DeJesus showed us that—but you had to have the wheels and smarts to get out after it landed. If you could move very well it helped, but most guys couldn't do that and play offense at the same time.

Clearly, Mayweather would box Duran and try to counter his rushes—with straight rights as Duran came in, with hooks after he got in. It's easy to see him succeeding early in the fight and frustrating a wild-swinging Duran. But Duran was too smart and too complete a fighter for Mayweather to hold off forever, and at 135 he was indefatigable. He'd keep rushing Mayweather, keep pressuring him, keep chopping away at him, keep roughing him up and pounding his body. He'd take over halfway through and mug Mayweather down the stretch. Duran by unanimous decision or late stoppage.

PERNELL WHITAKER

40-4-1 (17) with 1 no-contest

IBF/WBC Titleholder 1989-'92

WBA Titleholder/World Champion 1990-'92

Southpaw Whitaker jabs Rafael Pineda

So much of this business is about making your guy do what he doesn't want to do. Both Mayweather and Whitaker would want to do what they do best: slip and counter. But in order for one guy to counter, the other guy has to lead. Or, at the least, pretend that he's going to lead so he can draw the counter and then counter it. So the question is this: Which guy will make the other guy lead? And can the other guy counter effectively?

Mayweather likes to think of himself as more of a puncher than Whitaker did. That's because he's a better puncher than Whitaker was. So it would be Mayweather leading and Whitaker countering, which normally would be fine with Whitaker and which, at first, seems good for him from a strategic standpoint—he's getting to do what he does best. Here's the problem: Mayweather is just as fast as Whitaker was, nearly as good defensively, and has a very quick, stiff right hand. He'd land just enough of them to eke out a close decision over 12 tactical, restrained, nip-and-tuck rounds. ■

ALL PUNCH, NO CHIN

Diego Corrales suffers his seventh knockdown in his last six fights, a fourth-round tumble against Joel Casamayor. If "Chico's" chin was half as good as his punch, his career would be going a whole lot better.

MANDA LAY

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSON/GETTY IMAGES

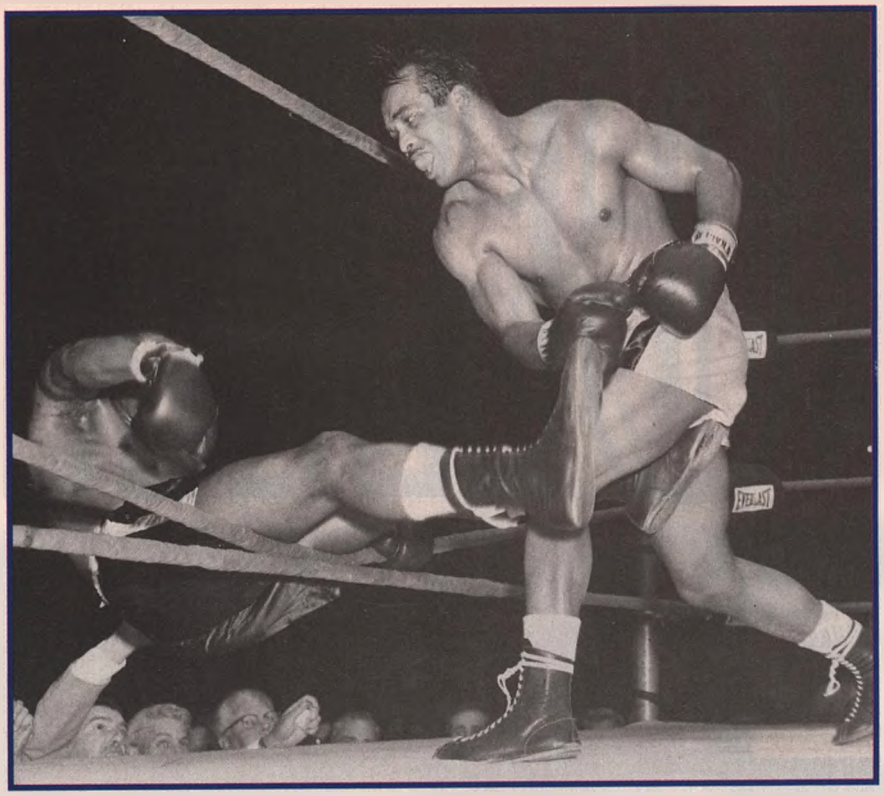
HOW CAN FIGHTERS OVERCOME E.S.S.?

By Don Stradley

There have been whispers about Diego Corrales' chin ever since his 2001 TKO loss to Floyd Mayweather, a fight that saw him knocked down five times before being rescued by his corner. That the furor over his chin hasn't been louder is surprising, because when you're knocked down five times in one fight, you have entered Floyd Patterson country, and people usually start snickering behind your back or pointing to their chins when you walk by.

Corrales assured us the Mayweather fight was a fluke. But now that Joel Casamayor has knocked him down twice more, the question is being asked again: Does "Chico" have a chin problem?

It's understandable that Corrales' supporters hesitate to label him chinny. After all, being branded that way is the boxing version of Hawthorne's scarlet letter. But there are different variations of chin trouble, and not all chinny fighters end up on their backs for a 10-count. For instance, there's the "cold chin," where a fighter tends to get hurt early because he needs a few rounds to find his groove. There's also the "tired chin," where a fighter is vulnerable when fatigued. There are also fighters who have



Bob Satterfield is the patron saint of huge punchers with no chin. His blowout of Johnny Summerlin (above) was one of 35 knockouts among his 50 wins, but his capitulation against Rex Layne (below) was one of the 13 kayo defeats among his 25 overall losses.

solid chins for most of their career but reach a point where they can't take it the way they used to, as if the chin had an expiration date.

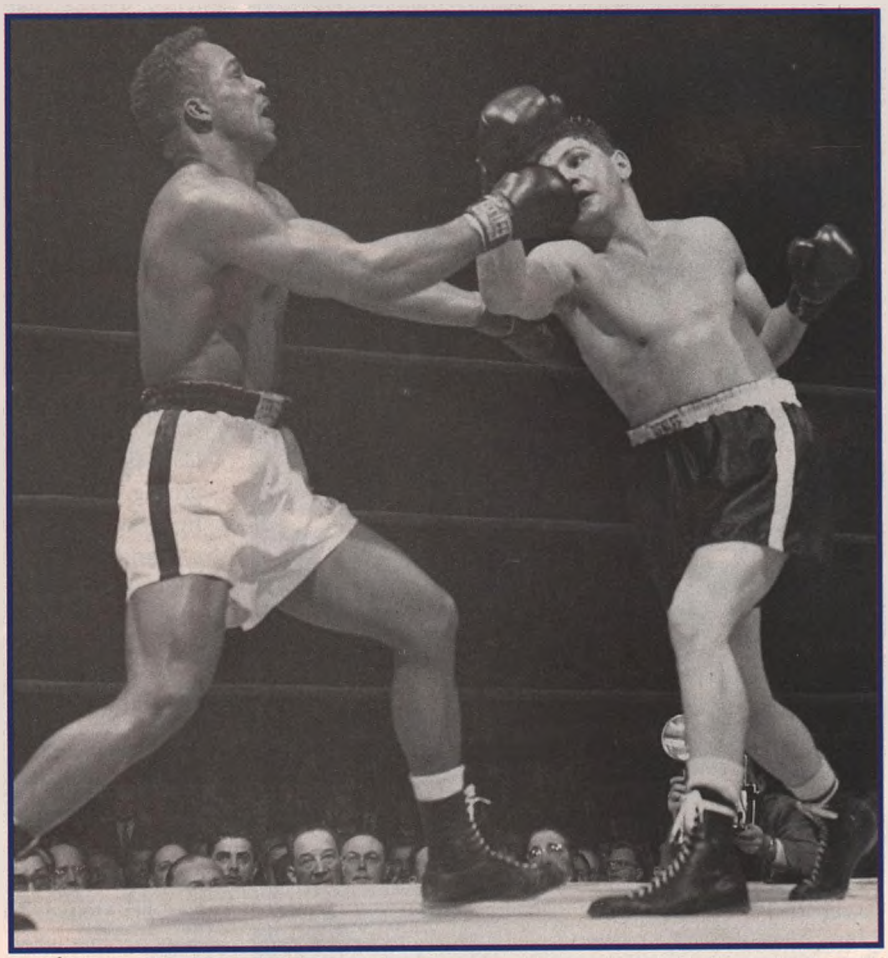
The most common chin problem might be called ESS, or "Earnie Shavers Syndrome," where a fighter focuses so much on offense that he forgets about defense. The vicious-hitting Corrales, who calls himself "an animal," may fit into this category.

The undisputed king of the all-punch-and-no-chin fighter would have to be 1950s heavyweight contender Bob Satterfield. Being hit by Satterfield was like being whacked with a meat cleaver, but his chin was so bad that even the light-hitting, naturally smaller Jake LaMotta was able to knock him out. Satterfield's do-or-die style made him a sensation during the early days of television, but he never quite got into position for a title shot and was kayoed himself 13 times. With just the slightest attention to defense, Satterfield would have gone much farther than he did, but some fighters never make the adjustment. In the case of Satterfield, and perhaps Corrales, the attitude remained "chill or be chilled."

The good news for Corrales is that Casamayor has agreed to a rematch. But Corrales will have to make some changes in his approach, otherwise Casamayor will pick up right where he left off.

In their first fight, Casamayor used a mixture of movement and roughhousing to keep Corrales from getting comfortable, and was able to land his left frequently over Chico's lazy right. Corrales showed plenty of courage—he was willing to fight even when his face had been turned to mulch—but he reacted to Casamayor's punches as if the Cuban had a brick in his glove. Perhaps Corrales is still too frail at 130 pounds, or perhaps he's still shaking off the ring rust accumulated during his time away from the sport. Or maybe, as many fighters say about the ability to take a punch, it was all in his mind.

"A lot of it is mental," said two-division former beltholder Roger Mayweather, a fighter once named by a major sports magazine as having the worst chin in all of boxing. "In the amateurs I didn't get hit a lot, so when I turned pro and started get-



Roger Mayweather's notoriously unreliable chin held up long enough for him to win a 12-round decision over Harold Brazier in 1988, prompting "The Black Mamba" to joke that his chin won him the fight. Three times, however, that same chin lost him fights within the first two rounds.

ting hit, I wasn't used to it. Then I started believing everything I read about my chin."

Mayweather, who now trains his nephew Floyd, took a better punch when he moved from lightweight to junior welter, and proved it during a 12-round split decision win over tough Harold Brazier. Mayweather

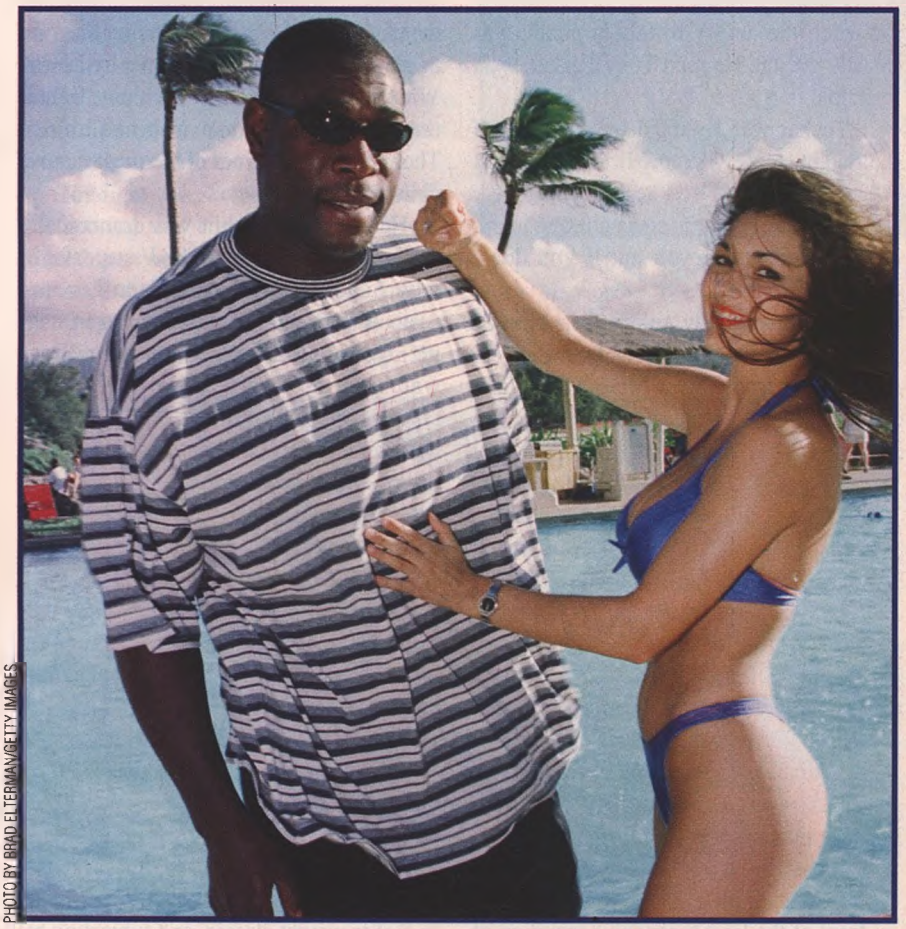


PHOTO BY BRAD ELTERMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Even Frank Bruno's shaky chin ought to be able to withstand this Hawaiian Tropic model's punch. But it couldn't withstand the punches of the assorted world-class heavyweights who made certain that all five of Bruno's defeats came inside the distance.

BOXING EQUIPMENT
EVERLAST
EST. 1910
BRONX, NEW YORK
WORLDWIDE.

It was Bruno who first exposed the china in Lennox Lewis' chin, hurting him badly before being kayoed by the future undisputed champ in their 1993 meeting. Lewis has always been most vulnerable to being shaken when he takes an opponent lightly, as he did Bruno.

teased reporters after the Brazier bout, saying, "My chin won me the fight."

While Mayweather didn't exactly turn into George Chuvalo, he made his chin less of a liability by using caginess and defense. But Mayweather had boxing skills to fall back on. Does Corrales have the instincts to box? Does he even have enough sense to keep his hands up?

In his loss to Casamayor, Corrales' idea of movement was to stalk across the ring and play directly into his opponent's hands. His trainer, Kenny Adams, begged him to move to his left and throw more right hands, but Corrales ignored him and gambled solely on his left hook. He eventually landed a shot that put Casamayor down briefly, but that may have been the worst thing that could happen for Corrales. Casamayor has now felt Corrales' power and will be more defensive in their next fight. Meanwhile, Corrales will probably point to that knockdown as proof he can stop Casamayor, and he'll continue to deny his chin problem.

Frank Bruno always denied he had a shaky set of whiskers. "Being chinny is getting knocked out at the first bell," Bruno once said, happily pointing out that his knockout losses usually came in the late rounds. Like Mayweather, Bruno believed the ability to take a punch was mostly mental. He used Tony Tucker as an example.

"Tucker was wobbled by guys before he fought [Mike] Tyson," Bruno said, "but when he fought Tyson he never wobbled. Why? Because he was concentrating more. It's easy to knock you out if you don't believe in yourself."

Bruno eventually believed in himself enough to win a portion of the heavyweight title from Oliver McCall. The final round of that fight saw an exhausted Bruno trying to survive McCall's late rally as well as a decade of bad press about his chin. It was a heroic, desperate performance, and only the most cold-hearted fans weren't pulling for Bruno to stay upright and win the decision. Sadly for Bruno, his first title defense was against the comebacking Tyson, a fighter who made nearly everyone appear to have chins of glass. That's why Tyson's fans gave him a puncher's chance in 2002 when he fought Lennox Lewis, a great champion whose chin kept him from being completely embraced by the public.

Lewis had the bad luck of performing in front of the least forgiving generation of fans in boxing history. Jack Dempsey and Joe Louis were both knocked out early in their careers and took their share of big spills, but sports fans of the '20s and '30s didn't begrudge them their vulnerabilities. Modern fans, raised on video games and round-the-clock violence, are impatient with fighters who are less than superhuman.

Fittingly, it was against Bruno that Lewis' chin first made headlines. Bruno hurt Lewis badly in the third round of their 1993 fight, only to be stopped four rounds later. But instead of being praised for the bravery he showed, Lewis was quickly labeled as another soft-chinned Brit. After his knockout loss to McCall, Lewis hired veteran trainer Emanuel Steward, who immediately encouraged the fighter to become more aggressive in the ring and more importantly, to never take an opponent lightly. "Lewis only has trouble with fighters he doesn't respect," Steward said.

Lewis' chin trouble never went away completely, but following Steward's guidance allowed him to defeat the best heavyweights of his era and ultimately turn back the challenge of Tyson. Choosing Steward as his trainer was a smart move by Lewis. Who better to deal with a chinny fighter than Steward, the man who had trained Thomas Hearns, owner of the most famous chin of the modern era?

Hearns' fragile chin was dramatically revealed during his 1981 superfight with Sugar Ray Leonard. Even Leonard seemed surprised when Hearns began staggering around the ring, and the millions watching the fight couldn't believe it, either. It had been the sort of megafight that attracted a lot of casual viewers, so people who knew nothing about boxing gathered around the water cooler the next day talking about the kid from Detroit who turned out to have a glass jaw.

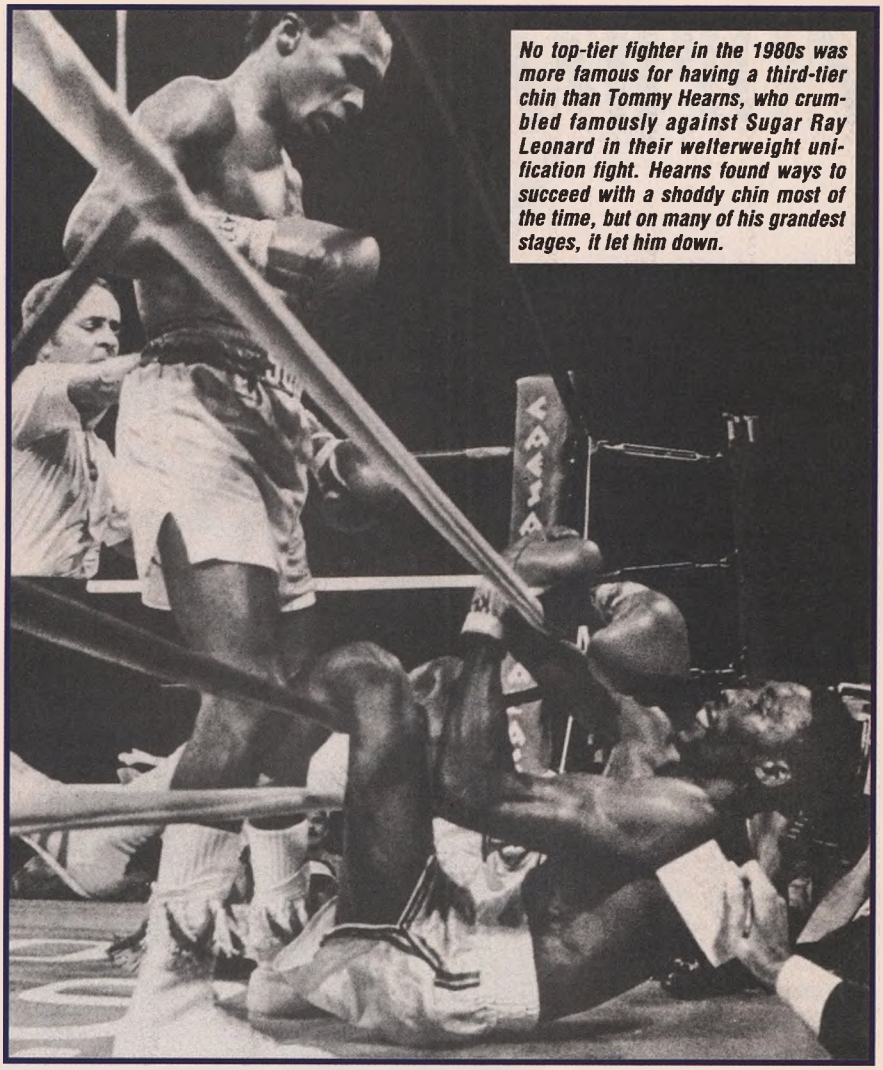
"I carry my hands too low," Hearns said after the fight. "I also have to learn how to clinch and tie a man up, which is much harder to do than people think." But even harder for Tommy was to get people to believe in him again now that the dirty little secret of his chin was out.

During the next seven years, Hearns' chin became part of boxing folklore. He tried to solve the problem by jumping to higher weight classes, and subjecting his legs and neck to grueling workouts. He even tried a futuristic mouthpiece designed

especially for him. But nothing helped. Marvin Hagler knocked him out. So did Iran Barkley. Juan Roldan hurt him, and James Kinchen shook him so badly that Tommy spent nearly a full minute hanging on to Kinchen like a lonely drunk. Most boxing people agreed that Hearns' chin was beyond repair, so there was a hint of cruelty involved when Leonard, looking for some easy money, granted Hearns a rematch in '88. Steward later admitted, "I knew Tommy could win, but I didn't know if he could take a punch. And Tommy wondered the same thing."

Hearns and Steward worked out a strategy that involved hard jabs followed by short movements to the right that kept Leonard off-balance for most of the fight. Hearns carried the plan out perfectly and seemed on his way to winning a close decision, but Leonard went for broke in the last round and finally connected with "The Hit Man's" legendary chin. Hearns probably thought, *Oh no! Not again!* and spent the final minutes of the fight backpedaling, flailing his long arms around, anything to keep some distance between himself and his old nemesis. It wasn't pretty, but it worked. Hearns remained on his feet, and when it was over, he pointed to his chin and smiled.

The fight was scored a draw, and while the scoring was controversial, there was something symbolic in the verdict. A draw meant that Thomas Hearns was just as good as Sugar Ray Leonard, and that's what he'd been telling us all along. The draw also broke the curse of Tommy's chin; he was never knocked out again, unless you count a second-round TKO loss to Uriah Grant in 2000 that came as a result of an ankle injury.



No top-tier fighter in the 1980s was more famous for having a third-tier chin than Tommy Hearns, who crumbled famously against Sugar Ray Leonard in their welterweight unification fight. Hearns found ways to succeed with a shoddy chin most of the time, but on many of his grandest stages, it let him down.

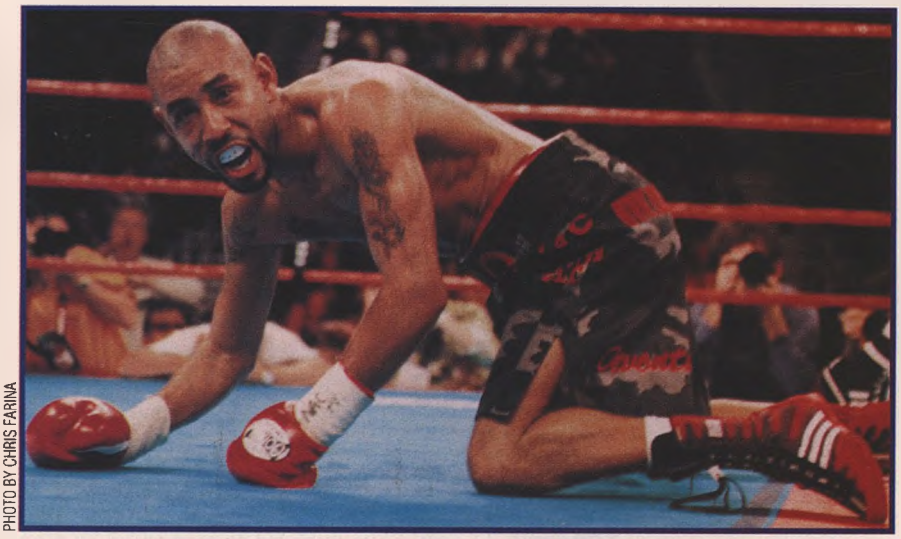


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Corrales first grew acquainted with the canvas in his five-knockdown defeat to Floyd Mayweather in January '01. If Chico doesn't make serious adjustments to his style, he's practically begging for more time on the floor in his March rematch with Casamayor.

A belief in yourself. A change in style. Not taking anyone lightly. Those are the ways some fighters have dealt with their chin trouble. What Diego Corrales needs to do is admit that he might have a problem and then go about fixing it. While it's true that Corrales always gets up after being knocked down, he's not going to win many decisions if he keeps handing out 10-8 rounds to his opponents.

But can a macho guy like Corrales ever admit to having a weakness? Perhaps at this stage in his career it's too late to fix his problem, and he'll continue turning his fights into shootouts. Because as Joe Louis once said, learning you can hit hard is like "finding religion," and fighters like Corrales are consumed by blind faith. ■

Don Stradley is a freelance writer living in Rockport, Massachusetts, and a frequent contributor to this magazine.

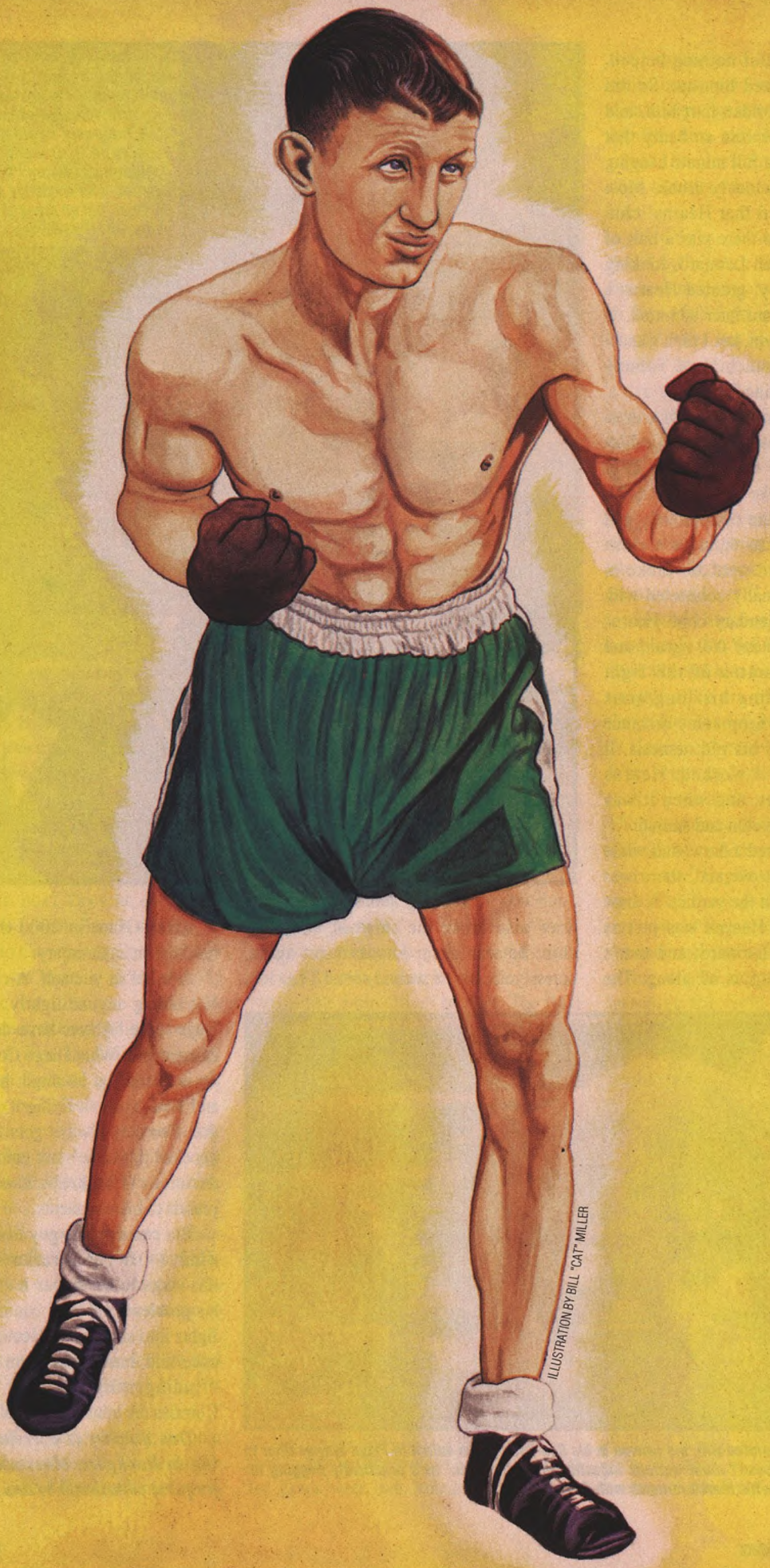


ILLUSTRATION BY BILL "CAT" MILLER

'40s FLYWEIGHT CHAMPION

RINTY MONAGHAN

Win Or Lose, He Left Irish Eyes Smiling

By Patrick Myler

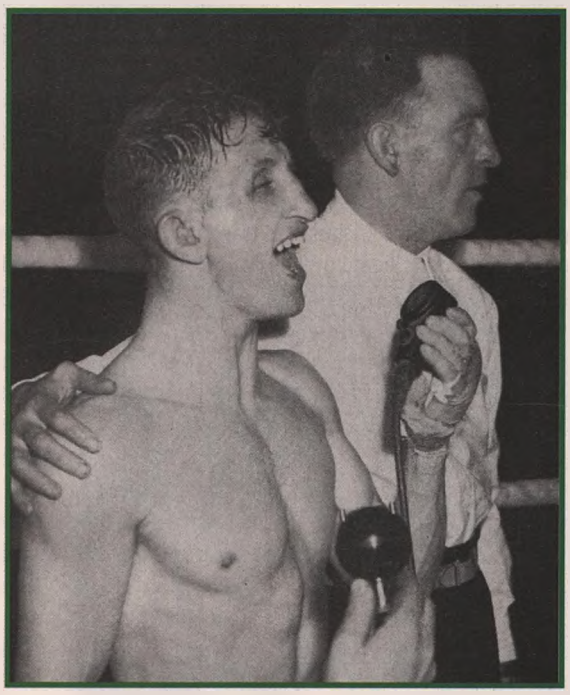
In any consideration of the best value-for-money fighters in history, Rinty Monaghan must be near the top of the list. Who else but the chirpy little Irishman, after a hard 15-round world title fight, gave the audience an extra treat by taking the mike and breaking into song?

The fact that he could find such surplus energy becomes more amazing when it's remembered that, for the last few years of his career, he was suffering from a chest ailment that hampered his breathing and would force him to retire in 1950 while still world flyweight champion.

It had gotten to the point that, if Monaghan didn't give his full-voiced rendition of "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," and maybe "Hello, Patsy Fagan" as an encore, the fans would feel cheated. So, no matter how much pain or exhaustion he was suffering, he made sure he always sent them home happy.

But Monaghan was always an entertainer. From the time he started slinging punches for pay at the tender age of 14 to performing his cabaret act right up to the time of his death at 63, he could always be relied upon to put on a show.

"If I was starting all over again, I think I would try to be a top entertainer rather than a fighter," he once said. "Nevertheless, I can't grumble. Life really has been a load of laughs for me. I was only serious when I stepped into the ring."

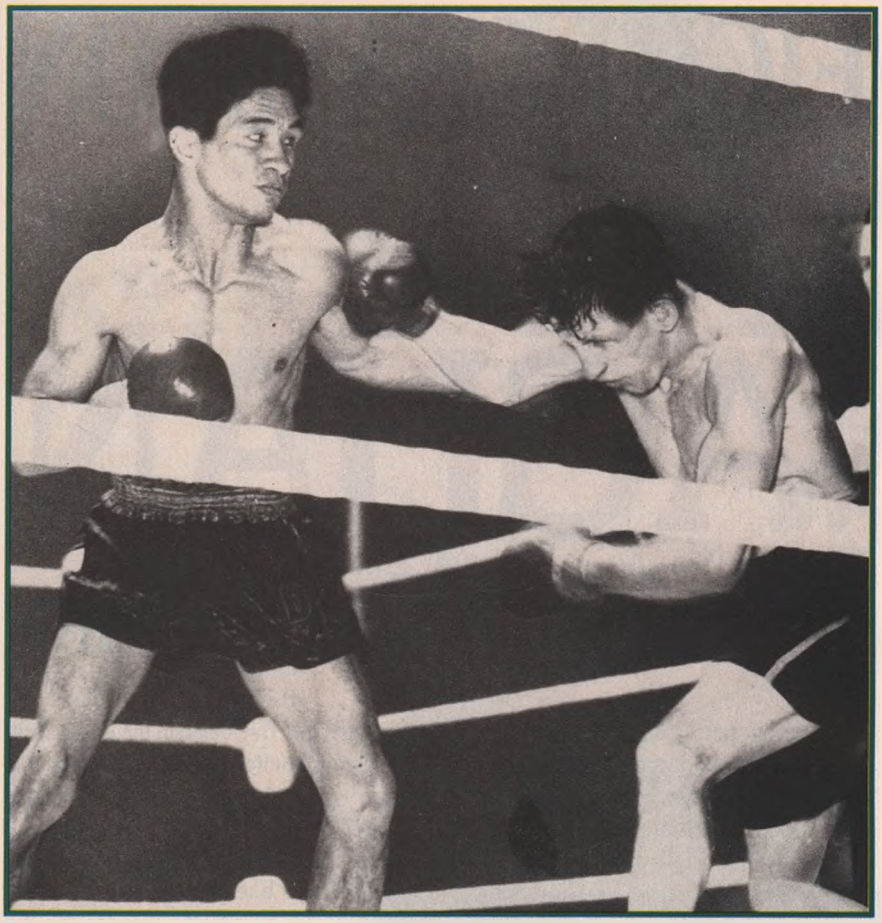


Win or lose, Monaghan always serenaded the crowd after his bouts, frequently with "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." After his career was over the popular Irish fighter had a cabaret act, singing and doing impressions.

Life, however, wasn't too much fun for Monaghan's parents, who struggled to provide for a hungry brood of 13 children, eight girls and five boys, in the grim, dockside area of Belfast where they lived. The future world champion, born on August 21, 1920, was christened John Joseph. It was his grandmother who called him Rinty, because of his love for movies starring the wonder dog Rin Tin Tin.

Schooling was rudimentary and, at 13, he was put to work in the famous Belfast shipyards, where generations had toiled to turn out mighty ocean-going vessels, including the ill-fated Titanic. Monaghan sought the hardest physical jobs to build up his muscles and used up whatever spare energy he had at a local amateur boxing club. Encouraged by his father, a former Royal Marine who had boxed as a lightweight, he enjoyed the lively sparring sessions. He never had an amateur contest, and signed as a professional before his 15th birthday with Frank McAloran, a former Irish featherweight champion. The close relationship with his manager lasted throughout his 16-year career.

By the age of 18, Monaghan weighed just 105 pounds, but was regularly facing opponents at or above the flyweight limit of 112 pounds. Nonetheless, his busy, aggressive style took him through his first 33 fights with only one defeat, to Jim Keery, and four



Monaghan lands a right to Dado Marino's shoulder during their 1947 bout that the Irishman won via controversial decision. The victory earned him a version of the flyweight title, but it wasn't until Monaghan beat Jackie Paterson the following year that he was universally recognized as champion.

draws. His progress came to a sudden halt when Jackie Paterson, a hard-hitting Scottish southpaw, arrived in Belfast to knock out the local favorite in five rounds. It was a huge shock, as it was the 17-year-old Paterson's second professional contest.

To celebrate his debut as a top-of-the-bill performer, Monaghan had bought a lurid silk dressing gown, and a great cheer greeted him as he bounced into the ring and leapt around in his usual prefight display. For four rounds, the Belfastman dazzled his opponent with his speed and shots from all angles, but he got cocky and was caught with a superb left hook that put him flat on his back. Up at nine, but out on his feet, he was dropped by another left for the full count. It would be the only time Paterson, who would go on to precede him as world flyweight champion, would emerge victorious in their three encounters.

Nineteen days later, Monaghan was back in action to convincingly outscore Joe Curran, who would last 15 rounds with Paterson in a British title bout eight years later. Curran put up such a game display in Belfast that English promoter Johnny Best enticed the Irishman to travel to Liverpool, Curran's hometown, for a rematch. Monaghan left nothing to chance, stiffening Curran in the fifth round.

As with all European boxers of the period, Monaghan's ring campaign was badly affected by Adolf Hitler's reign of terror. Throughout World War II, he boxed just eight times, winning four, losing three, and drawing one. He did his bit serving with the Merchant Navy, during which his ship was torpedoed, then as an ambulance driver for Belfast's Civil Defense, and finally, to his great joy, as a member of ENSA (Entertainments National Service Association), which entailed traveling all over Europe helping to keep up troop morale.

When the war was over, Monaghan considered taking up a show business career. As a member of a group called The Three Hillbillies, he sang to the accompaniment of his pals on the guitar and harmonica and did impressions of popular personalities of the day. But boxing remained his first love.

Soon he was back to his rigid training routine, which included working on a farm, climbing up steep Cave Hill, just outside the city, chopping down trees, swallowing raw eggs, and washing them down with a pint of goat's milk. Then, in the evenings, he would train at manager McAloran's downtown gym.

Boxing boomed in post-war Belfast and promoter Bob Gardiner delightedly put up the "house full" signs on November 6, 1945, when Monaghan took on Eddie "Bunty" Doran for the vacant Northern Ireland flyweight title. Rinty knocked his local rival cold in the fourth round, and the celebrations only ended late that night when the champion sang from his bedroom window to the huge crowd gathered outside his home in Little Corporation Street. Rated number 10 in the world by THE RING back in 1939, he had been dropped for inactivity, but was now up to number four.

In April '46, Monaghan was coming up to 26 and knew that lost time had to be made up if he was to achieve the fistic fame he had always dreamed about. His opportunity came when Paterson, now world champion, was enticed over to Belfast for a return match. Rinty got his revenge—but not the title. The scheduled 10-rounder was at a catch weight, as the Scot was known to be struggling to meet the 112-pound flyweight limit. Paterson was forced to retire with a badly cut eye after seven rounds.

"It was generally conceded that I was well ahead on points and that I outpunched and outfought Paterson," Monaghan later recalled. "After the fight I obliged the crowd with a song, but for once I made a bad blunder."

The song he chose was "Broken Hearted Clown," a real party favorite guaranteed to have guests weeping into their drinks, and the many Scots in the audience took it as a slur on their defeated hero. Monaghan's next fight was against Alec Murphy in Glasgow, and the locals made clear their animosity to the Irishman before and after his points win.

"I never had the slightest intention of hurting Jackie's feelings," Monaghan explained. "In the exciting atmosphere I had simply sung the first song that came into my head. I didn't realize its implications until it was too late."

Monaghan poses with his wife, Frances, and their three children outside of their home in Belfast, Northern Ireland (above). Monaghan was a huge favorite in Belfast and his fans covered the walls of his neighborhood with graffiti in his honor (below).

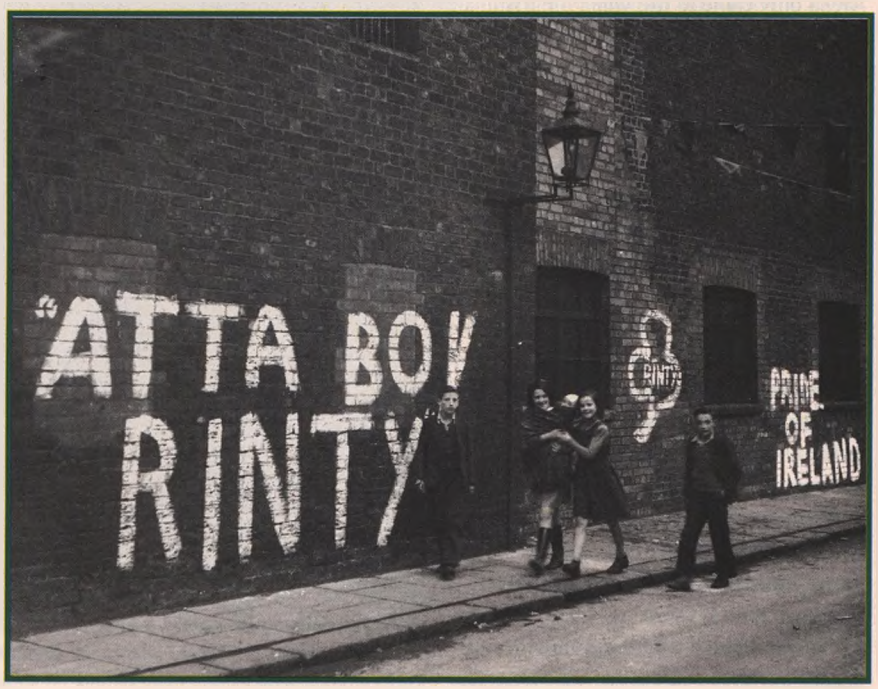
Now rated top contender by THE RING, he was sure his world title chance would come. Much to his annoyance, he heard that Paterson would make his next defense in Glasgow against Dado Marino of Hawaii. As there was some doubt about the champion's ability to make the stipulated poundage, Monaghan was engaged to stand by in case he was needed as a substitute. A week before the scheduled date, he was told he would not be needed, so he went on holiday, indulging his voracious appetite on his standby pay.

Back in Scotland to watch the world title bout, he was enjoying a hearty meal in a restaurant when the news got out that Paterson had collapsed just before the weigh-in and wouldn't be able to fight. A search party organized by the frantic promoter found the Irishman and hurried him to the scales. Well over weight and in no fit condition to face a fully trained, highly ranked opponent, he nevertheless agreed to go ahead with the non-title contest before a sellout crowd at Ibrox Park, home of the Glasgow Rangers football club. In a farcical affair, Monaghan mauled and spoiled against a frustrated Marino until, in the ninth round, he was disqualified for persistent holding.

Top British promoter Jack Solomons then stepped into the picture. He had seen Monaghan make a sensational London debut by halting Terry Allen in a single round and then outpointing French champion Emile Famechon. Solomons paired Monaghan with Marino over 15 rounds on October 20, 1947, and advertised the contest as being for the vacant world flyweight title, taking it for granted that Paterson would never again make 112 pounds.

Paterson, however, was a proud champion and was not prepared to concede defeat. He obtained a court order preventing the British Boxing Board of Control from recognizing anyone else as champion or approving any contest not involving him as being for the title.

So the Monaghan-Marino fight went ahead with just America's National Boxing Association and the Irish Boxing Board of Control accepting it as being for the world title. After a dull encounter, enlightened briefly when the Hawaiian scored an 11th-round knockdown, Rinty's hand was raised by referee Teddy Waltham, the sole



Nat Fleischer, editor and publisher of The Ring, presents Monaghan with his championship belt.

arbiter, as the winner on points. He had done most of the leading while Marino, keeping a tight defense, tried to steal the points with late rallies in each round. The 10,700 spectators at London's Harringay Arena only came to life when the Irishman gave his customary rendition of "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," which drew sustained applause.

Back in Belfast, no one fell asleep as the radio commentators tried their best to make the dire affair sound interesting. Nor did anyone care that Monaghan was only a partial world champion. Bonfires were lit all around the fighter's home as crowds sang and danced in celebration of his victory. More relieved than excited was Monaghan's wife, Frances, who was so nervous that she spent the entire duration of the contest pacing up and down outside her sister's house while other family members sat inside glued to the radio. Only when someone rushed out to tell her that her husband had won did she permit a smile.

The only way the disputed championship could be settled was for Monaghan and Paterson to meet in the ring. The British Board gave the Scot six months to agree to the match or forfeit his claim. Bob Gardiner scooped his promotional rivals by signing the pair to meet at the King's Hall, Belfast, on March 23, 1948. His only worry was that Paterson would be unable to make the flyweight limit. Jackie did, but at terrible cost.

On the day of the fight, Monaghan weighed in at a pound inside the limit, but there was no sign of Paterson. He had been due in Belfast the day before, but failed to show. Reporters were getting ready to write their stories that the fight was off when Jackie swept through the doors and stepped onto the scales. Looking pale and drawn, he made the weight with four ounces to spare. It was later revealed that he had spent the previous night playing cards in front of a roaring fire, smothered in heavy sweaters, in a desperate bid to lose the excess poundage. He left it to the last minute to catch a plane.

Monaghan, while aware that his opponent would be weak after his ordeal, remembered the damage that Paterson had done with his big punch in their first encounter and started cautiously. In the second round, however, he saw an opening

Monaghan walks Beauty the goat in the countryside outside of Belfast where he trained. Monaghan always drank goat's milk when training for a big match.

and dropped the Scot with a swift hook. Paterson survived and even had Monaghan on the run in the next round after shaking him with a right.

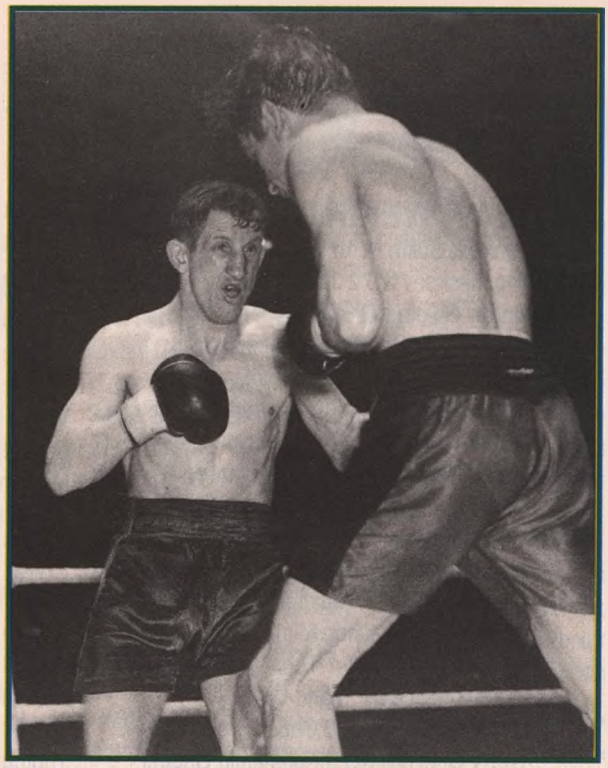
By the seventh round, however, Paterson was weakening badly, and a terrific right bounced him off the canvas. Lurching up groggily at eight, he was driven into a corner by the fury of Monaghan's attack. Propped up by the ropes, he took a ferocious pounding before sliding slowly to the floor to be counted out. After the now undisputed world flyweight champion took the mike for his usual party piece, Belfast again went mad. Fans marched from the arena to pull down fences near his home and light bonfires that blazed right through the night.

The first home-based Irishman ever to win a world title also picked up Paterson's British and British Empire crowns. He added the European championship to his collection in his first world title defense, against Maurice Sandeyron, again in Belfast. A top-form Monaghan was a clear points winner after 15 hard rounds against the durable Frenchman. It was noticeable, however, that he tired badly toward the end, and ringsiders could plainly hear his wheezes and sharp intakes of breath. Still he managed to perform his "Irish Eyes" act for his loyal supporters.

After a non-title points win over Italian Otello Belardinelli, Monaghan put all four of his prizes at stake against London barrow boy Terry Allen in Belfast on September 30, 1949. Little did anyone realize beforehand it would be the Irishman's last ring appearance.

Allen had qualified for his big chance by outscoring Monaghan in a non-title bout seven months earlier, avenging his quick defeat by the Irishman in 1947. He brought over a big crowd of supporters from London to the King's Hall for his championship bid and had them roaring expectantly when he dropped the champion in the second round. But Allen failed to follow up his advantage and generally gave a disappointing performance.

Monaghan, clearly having difficulty with his breathing, fought well in patches, but sought frequent rests in clinches. At the end of 15 tedious rounds, referee Sam Russell thought neither man had done enough to win and declared a draw. The home crowd thought their man had been robbed and a threatened riot was only averted when Monaghan vocalized that Irish eyes were still smiling. Despite the unsatisfactory result, he was still champion.



Monaghan, who suffered from chronic bronchitis, gasps for breath as arch-rival Terry Allen advances. They fought three times, with each winning once and the final meeting ending in a draw.

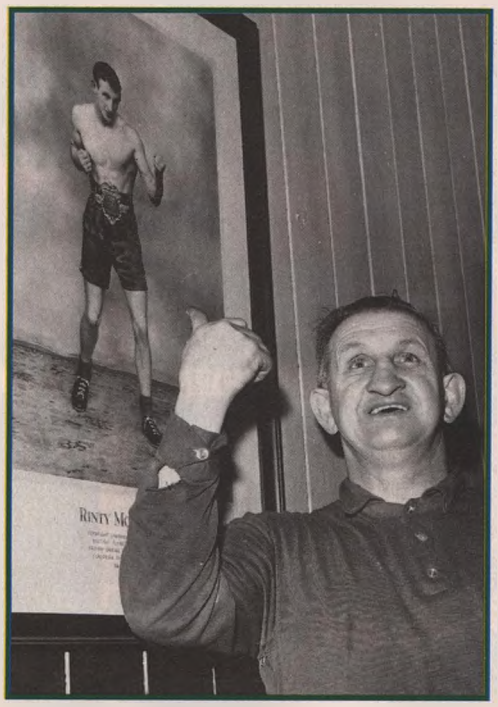
On April 25, 1950, Monaghan announced his retirement due to chronic bronchitis. Almost 30, he stepped down as undefeated world flyweight champion and with a 51-9-6 (20) record. Two years later, he wanted to make a comeback, but was refused a license by the British Boxing Board of Control.

A happy-go-lucky character who couldn't resist a hard-luck story, Monaghan had little to show for his years in the ring, but he readily accepted that he would have to go on working to provide a living for his wife and four children. He drove a cab and then a truck while raking in some extra cash as an entertainer. Not all his stage performances were for pay. Charity organizers never had to ask him twice and, as well as his singing, his Popeye and Olive Oyl impressions always brought the house down.

Failing health curtailed his cabaret work in his later years, but he was a familiar figure on big fight nights in Belfast and he was always ready to give useful advice to promising youngsters.

When Rinty died on March 3, 1984, thousands lined the streets of Belfast for the funeral. Father Myles Murray told the congregation in St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Donegall Street: "He brought good news. He was a gentleman, loved by many. That is what life is all about, touching people, bringing joy and happiness, making friends."

Terry Allen, who won the vacant world title on Monaghan's retirement and then lost it four months later to Dado Marino, said: "Rinty was a fascinating character. We were rivals in the ring, but like brothers out of it. He always seemed to be happy and made everyone in his presence happy. A great champion and a great sportsman." ■



Three years before his death in 1984, Monaghan points to a photograph of himself during his championship days. Thousands lined the streets of Belfast for Rinty's funeral.

Patrick Myler is a freelance writer based in Dublin, Ireland, who has written several books on boxing and is an occasional contributor to this magazine.

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Dominick Guinn W 10 Derrick Banks
Oleg Maskaev KO 2 Julius Francis
Andrew Golota KO 6 Terrance Lewis
Ray Mercer KO 3 Shawn Robinson
Jovo Pudar KO 6 Derek Bryant
Timo Hoffman W 12 Zuri Lawrence
Saul Montana KO 1 Gabe Brown
Sedreck Fields KO 5 Sami Elovaara
Albert Sosnowski KO 1 Chirs Woollas
Gilbert Martinez W 8 Charles Hatcher
Billy Zumbrun W 6 Joe Hipp
Matt Skelton KO 1 Patriche Costel
Cyril Seror KO 3 Iftode Mihai
David Rodriguez KO 1 Tommy Connelly
Art Binkowski KO 7 Mario Cawley
Patrice L'Heureux W 8 Chuck Brown
Thierry Guezouli KO 3 Konstantin Onofrei
Chauncy Welliver KO 1 Chris Brown
John Poore KO 1 Travis Fulton
Ruslan Chagaev KO 2 Daniel Frank
B.J. Flores D 4 Semisi Blommfield

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Johnny Nelson W 12 Alexander Petkovic
Carl Thompson W 6 Paul Bonson
Vincenzo Rossitto D 10 Rudiger May
Valery Brudov KO 1 Bruce Ozbek
David Haye KO 1 Tony Dowling
Mohammed Benguesmia KO 3 Marco Heinichen
Jorge Kahwagi KO 2 Mario Maciel

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Roy Jones W 12 Antonio Tarver
(Retains World Title)
Glencoffe Johnson D 12 Clinton Woods
(For Vacant IBF Title)
Thomas Ulrich W 8 Carl Handy
Stipe Drews KO 6 Olivier Beard
Zsolt Erdei KO 1 Ramdane Serdjane

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Junior bantam Julio Zarate uppercuts Oscar Andrade en route to controversial decision win

Peter Oboh KO 11 Elvis Michailenko
Otis Grant W 8 Dingaan Thobela
Adrian Diaconu KO 2 Tiwon Taylor

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Robert Allen KO 1 Steve Walker
Jermain Taylor KO 7 Rogelio Martinez
Brian Magee KO 8 Hassine Cherifi
David Lopez KO 7 Lonnie Bradley
Tony Dodson KO 11 Allan Foster
Jean-Paul Mendy W 10 Rachid Kanfouah
Vitali Tsypko W 10 Francisco Mora
Denis Inkin KO 4 Chris Nembhard
Ricardo Cortes KO 9 Christian Cruz
Glen Rayburn W 10 Romero Johnson
Carl Froch KO 7 Alan Page

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Pedro Ortega KO 9 Eric Regan
Lorenzo DiGiacomo W 10 Jeronimo Garcia
Ottavio Barone W 12 Mike Algoet
Yoshihiro Araki KO 9 Eiji Nakamura
Dirk Dzemski KO 9 Virgil McClendon
Naotaka Hozumi KO 5 Elvin Marbun
Lawrence Murphy KO 1 Wayne Elcock
Steve Bendall W 8 Kreshnick Qato
Rasheem Brown KO 2 Earl Allen
Jose Luis Zertuche W 6 Carl Cockerham
Denis Saioni KO 5 Adrian Sauca
Elvin Ayala KO 1 Darius Hunter

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Winky Wright W 12 Angel Hernandez
(Retains IBF Title)
Alex Bunema W 12 Anthony Shuler
Kuvanych Toygonbayev W 10
Andrei Pestriaev
Julio Cesar Chavez KO 2 Willy Wise
Fernando Hernandez KO 3 Frankie Randall
Simone Rotolo KO 8 Bendele Ilunga
Tshepo Mashego W 12 William Gare
Jamie Moore KO 7 Andrew Facey
Christophe Canclaux W 8 Charden Ansoula
Joseph Makaringe KO 8 Sergio Acuna
Said Ouali KO 4 James Johnson
Anthony Thompson KO 6 Jose Avila
Dante Craig KO 6 Ernesto Zamora
Joachim Alcine KO 1 Benjamin Modeste
Harry Yorgey W 4 Peter Kaljevic

WELTERWEIGHTS

Manuel Gomez W 10 David Ojeda
Jesse James Leija KO 2 Fernando Mena
Miguel Angel Gonzalez KO 3
Norberto Sandoval
Walter Crucce KO 10 Marcelo Rodriguez
Miguel Figueroa KO 8 Chucky T
Antonio Lauri W 6 Virgil Meleg
Joshua Clottey KO 6 Jeffrey Hill
Motoki Sasaki KO 4 Yuji Kato
Paul Williams KO 1 Arturo Rodriguez
Jesse Feliciano KO 7 Raul Franco
Sergey Stepkin KO 6 Luiz Da Silva
Armando Velardez W 8 Frankie Sanchez
Brooke Wellby KO 6 Rico Tan
Sven Paris KO 6 Zoran Didanovic
Dmitriy Salita KO 4 Richard Conchaz
David Jackson KO 1 Cimarron Davis

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Oktay Urkal W 12 Krzystof Bienias
Juan Valenzuela KO 8 Ernie Zavala
Angel Manfredy KO 9 Johnny Gutierrez
Mike Stewart KO 8 Ivan Robinson
Francisco Bojado W 12 Juan Carlos Rubio
Emmanuel Clottey W 12 Jesus Santiago
Muhammad Abdullaev KO 4
Marian Leondraliu
Americo Santos KO 5 Rudy Lundsford

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Javier Jauregui KO 11 Leavander Johnson
(Wins Vacant IBF Title)
Aldo Rios W 10 Nazareno Ruiz
Stefano Zoff KO 7 Christophe de Busillet
Juan Diaz KO 6 Joel Perez
Ernesto Zepeda KO 5 Omar Bernal
Rolando Reyes KO 1 John Brown
Jason Cook KO 7 Ariel Olveira
Koji Arisawa KO 5 Hideki Shudo
Eloy Rojas KO 4 Abdul Blackburn
Miguel Huerta W 10 Roque Cassiani
Antonio Pitalua KO 1 Carlos Mairena
Kevin Bennett W 12 Michael Muya
Steve Conway KO 5 Yuri Romanov
Almazbek Raimkulov W 8 Pascali Adorno
Luis Arceo W 8 Donald Camarena
Rogelio Ramirez W 6 Octavio Lara
Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. KO 1
Eugene Johnson

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Ivan Fiorleta W 10 Michele Landi
Willie Limond W 4 Anthony Hanna

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Manny Pacquiao KO 11
Marco Antonio Barrera
(Wins World Title)
Paulie Ayala W 10 Edel Ruiz
(Non-Title Fight)
Scott Harrison KO 11 Manuel Medina
Rocky Juarez W 12 Hector Velazquez
Ivan Valle KO 3 Angel Vazquez
Juan Carlos Ramirez KO 1 Alberto Cepeda
Jorge Solis W 12 Wilson Alcorro
Takalani Ndlovu KO 6 Luyolo Kotsana
Dazzo Williams W 12 Roy Rutherford
Saenchai Sor Kingstar W 12
Rud 4K Kevkatche
Martin Honorio KO 10 Sergio Sanchez
Bernard Dunne W 6 Alejandro Ramirez

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Oscar Larios KO 10
Napapol Kiatisakchokchai
(Retains WBC Title)
Yoddamrong Sithyodthong KO 1
Nonoy Villaflor
Diego Morales Tech. Win 6
Evangelio Perez
Yoshikane Nakajima KO 10 Akihiro Kanai
Nobuaki Naka W 10 Hirokazu Uesugi
Somsak Sithchatchawal KO 7
Ibragimov Takhir
Wethya Sakmuangklang W 6
Michael Domingo
Simon Ramoni W 6 Zolile Mbityi
Nestor Rocha W 8 Marcos Badillo
Ruben Contreras W 6 Carlos Madrigal

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Silence Mabuza KO 8 Khulile Makeba
Kozumi Hasegawa KO 10 Alvin Felisilda
Daisuke Maruyama W 10
Petchkhlongphai Sod Dharnthip
Saenghiran Lookbanyai KO 3
Rommel Libradilla
Gabriel Elizondo W 6 Juan Francisco Soto

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Jose Navarro W 12 Reynaldo Hurtado
Julio Zarate W 10 Oscar Andrade
Vernie Torres W 12 Miguel Del Valle
Elena Reid D 4 Johanna Pena

FLYWEIGHTS

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam W 12
Hussein Hussein
(Retains WBC Title)
Omar Narvaez KO 10 Alexander Mahmutov
Brahim Asloum W 12
Jose Antonio Lopez Bueno
Denkaosaen Kaowichit KO 3
Roger Jack Maldecir
Bernard Inom W 10 Franck Gorjux

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Beibis Mendoza W 12 Yosam Choi
Pichit Siriwat KO 6 Yongkie Afrizal
Hugo Cazares W 10 Panchito Moreno
Shunsuke Nagao KO 10 Kimoon Na
Javier Lagos W 6 Liborio Romero

STRAWWEIGHTS

Muhammad Rachman Tech. Draw 4
Abrin Matta
Junichiro Kaneda KO 3 Hiroshi Kasamatsu

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The RING

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

After his breakout win over Marco Antonio Barrera, new featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao told HBO's Larry Merchant that, back home in the Philippines, this fight was "comparable to the Lennox Lewis and Tyson fight." The truth was, whatever country you were watching from, this fight was comparable to Lewis-Tyson. From the second round on, Pacquiao, like Lewis, punished his opponent as thoroughly and one-sidedly as was imaginable, until anyone with a heart was praying for the massacre to come to an end.

But unlike Tyson in the Lewis fight, Barrera was no washed-up punching bag going in. For all we knew prior to the opening bell, Barrera was a living legend still in his prime, which was what made his pummeling at the hands of Pac-Man perhaps the single most impressive performance seen in a boxing ring in 2003.

Pacquiao never showed Barrera the respect usually afforded a legend. The quick-fisted Filipino slugger came right out and took the fight to Barrera, and as a result, Pacquiao dominated nearly the entire bout. The win made Pac-Man an instant candidate for Fighter of the Year, and the only logical choice for Fighter of the Month.

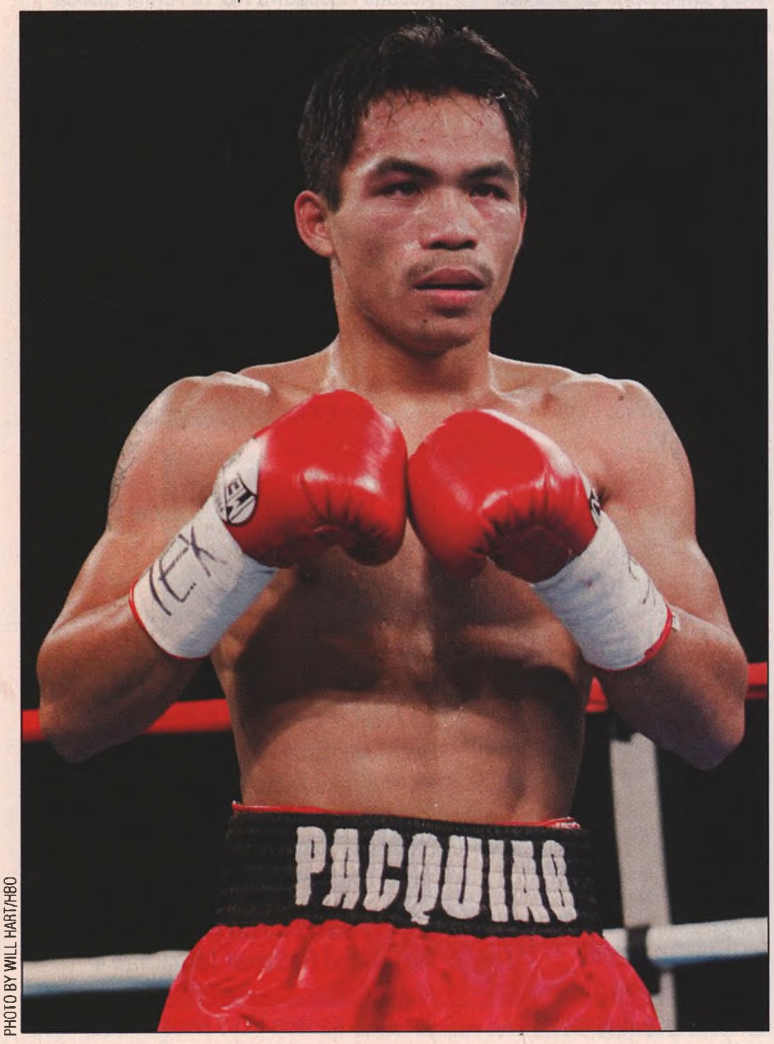

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Manny Pacquiao

RINGSIDE REPORTS

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Wright rips game Hernandez with a left to the head

Winky Wright W 12 Angel Hernandez

Las Vegas, Nevada: He's a southpaw, he's slick, he's good defensively, he doesn't pack the biggest punch in his division. Oh, and he is willing to fight anybody, although not everyone seems willing to fight him.

IBF heavyweight titlist Chris Byrd? No, the 154-pound equivalent, IBF junior middleweight beltholder Wright, whose frequent callings-out of the better-known, more-marketable likes of Oscar De La Hoya and Bernard Hopkins have taken on a tinge of desperation.

Wright, the St. Petersburg, Florida, resident who appears to have inherited Derrick "Smoke" Gainer's old role as chief caddy to superstar Roy Jones, retained the title on an impressive but mostly overlooked unanimous decision over Hernandez in the lead-in bout prior to Jones' main event clash with Antonio Tarver.

Fighting the brawling Hernandez mostly at close quarters, ostensibly for the benefit of 8,794 spectators at the Mandalay Bay Events Center and an HBO Pay-Per-View audience, Wright parried most of what the Chicagoan threw at him, and countered effectively whenever he spied an opening.

Afterward, Wright, 46-3 (25), got down to the real business at hand as he issued another challenge to Hopkins, the undisputed middleweight champion who was scheduled to defend against William Joppy December 13 in Atlantic City.

"I won mine, Bernard," Wright said. "Now it's your turn."

Even as he prepared to take on the active but limited Hernandez, 25-5 (16), Wright's focus was on Hopkins and De La Hoya, whom he derisively refers to as "Oscar De Avoida."

"The future is now," Wright said. "I do not want to end my career with a fight against Hopkins. I want to define my career and fight Hopkins now, for his title at his weight."

There is no mounting groundswell for such a fight to happen, but there might not be many attractive options available to either man if De La Hoya continues to elect to face other opponents.

Wright, 154, presumably could have used his jab to outfinesse Hernandez, 154, from the outside, but he settled into a comfort zone in tight and beat the challenger at his own rough game. Although Wright threw only 768 punches according to CompuBox, compared to 1,040 for Hernandez, he outlanded Hernandez 253-196 and was in command throughout.

"I didn't box," said Wright, 31, who added he sometimes feels like "I have the Ebola virus" because of the way the marquee guys avoid him. "I wanted to give the fans what they wanted to see, so I slugged with him."

Judges Valerie Dorsett, Adelaide Byrd, and Chuck Giampa, all Americans, submitted scorecards favoring Wright by respective margins of 119-109, 118-110, and 117-111. THE RING saw it 118-110. The referee was Tony Weeks (USA).

Hernandez, 28, didn't have a beef with the decision, but he believed he was active and effective enough to have merited a better shake in the scoring.

"I thought the fight was closer than the judges had it," he said. "I thought I did good. But I made some mistakes and I paid for them."

Look for Wright to continue to hound Hopkins with clever digs scripted by his workaholic publicist, Fred Sternburg, who once did p.r. for "The Executioner" and presumably knows which buttons need to be pushed.

Promoter: Square Ring in association with Star Promotions
(11-8-03)
Bernard Fernandez

Jermain Taylor KO 7 Rogelio Martinez

Las Vegas, Nevada: He has not been hollering for a matchup with Bernard Hopkins as long or as loud as Winky Wright, but 25-year-old middleweight contender Taylor is making a case for himself that is no less compelling.

Taylor, the 2000 Olympic bronze medalist from Little Rock, Arkansas, who is ranked in the top 10 by THE RING and by all three major sanctioning organizations, continued to look like a future threat to Hopkins, the undisputed middleweight champion, when he stopped the game but outclassed Martinez in seven rounds on the undercard of a pay-per-view show topped by the Jones-Tarver light heavyweight title bout.

Taylor, 162, never was able to put Martinez, a Dominican who now lives and fights out of Philadelphia, on the canvas, but that's all right. The 29-year-old Martinez, 160, never has been put down by anybody during his 19-bout professional career. But Taylor, 18-0 (13), seized control of the fight from the opening bell and he

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Martinez reels from a Taylor left

never gave an indication his grip might loosen.

Taylor was in such a rhythm, he even objected when referee Joe Cortez (USA) stepped in to wave the scheduled 10-rounder to a halt at 1:42 of round seven. Usually, it's the loser who complains when a stoppage is called. Then again, Cortez' decision may have been influenced by the fact that Martinez' cornermen had mounted the ring apron to signal that their guy had had enough.

"Rogelio fought his heart out," said P.J. Augustine, Martinez' promoter. "There was no need for him to take any more of a beating than he had already taken."

"They should have never stopped the fight," said Taylor, who seemed to have enjoyed his own performance. "I felt good and strong and I had all the energy and power in the world."

In other words, he looked like someone with the talent and moxie to succeed Hopkins at whatever point "The Executioner," who turned 39 on January 15, is ready to vacate or be pushed off the 160-pound throne.

"I'm ready right now for Hopkins," Taylor said. "That's my dream, my goal. I want to fight him to prove I'm the best."

Taylor's trainer, Pat Burns, said youth always must be served, and believes his fighter is almost ready to take the next step up.

"He's always had the tools, great power and great speed," Burns said of Taylor. "The great thing is that he still wants to learn and he's still in the learning process. It's scary to think of what he will be able to do down the road. I wouldn't want to be an opponent facing him."

Hopkins, of course, is vastly more experienced and skilled than Martinez, 13-5-1 (5), but Martinez, who is as tough as any fighter bearing a Philly imprimatur, is the sort of measuring stick rising contenders need to gauge their progress.

And make no mistake, Taylor continues to grade out high. He raked Martinez with jabs, hooks, overhand rights, doing pretty much whatever he pleased whenever he wanted to do it. All three American judges—Duane Ford, Al Lefkowitz, and Paul Smith—had Taylor pitching a 60-54 shutout at the time of the stoppage.

Television: HBO Pay-Per-View

Promoter: Square Ring in association with DiBella Entertainment

(11-08-03)

Bernard Fernandez

Glencoffe Johnson D 12 Clinton Woods

Sheffield, England: Just a week prior to fighting Roy Jones for the right to be known as the world's best light heavyweight, Antonio Tarver was stripped of the IBF belt for fighting Jones, upgrading this bout from eliminator status to a fight for the vacant IBF light heavyweight title. The devalued title remained vacant, however, as Johnson, 173¾, Miami, Florida, via Jamaica, built up an early lead before Woods, 174, Sheffield, England, gradually hauled his way back, denying the Floridian the belt he feels has been long overdue. Controversial decisions have dogged the 34-year-old Johnson's career, and he was convinced that he was the victim of another before Woods' hometown crowd at the Hillsborough Leisure Centre.

Against the likes of Sven Ottke (in an IBF super middleweight title fight in 1999), Silvio Branco, Omar Sheika, Julio Gonzalez, and others, the gentleman Jamaican has emerged on the losing side of close encounters, convincing him almost of a conspiracy to separate him from his entitlement. That the judges failed to separate him and Woods will only prolong his paranoia. Certainly, the rounds he won were claimed more emphatically than those taken by the local man, but Woods edged enough of them to make the scoring closer than Johnson believed it would be.

With a solid right hand in the opening round, Johnson, 39-9-2 (27), seized the initiative and had Woods, 35-2-1 (21), covering up and retreating. Johnson was only too happy to keep it this way, and his aggression over the first three rounds carried him to a strong lead. Woods took too many right hands and left hooks, struggling to grasp an opportunity that was far more inviting than the one he had landed a year earlier in Portland, Oregon, when it was Jones who came out of the opposite corner and beat him in six rounds.

After three rounds against Johnson, Woods knew that he faced another night of digging down deep into his reserves, as he did gamely against Jones, if he was going to prevail. Spurred on by his trainer, former heavyweight titleholder Tim Witherspoon, Woods began to make inroads in the fourth round with his jab and left hook and maintained the momentum into the fifth. But the sixth was another round for Johnson as he pinned Woods on the ropes and landed to the head and body.

Back out in the center of the ring and boxing behind his jab, Woods, 31, took the seventh and eighth rounds as Johnson's work deteriorated and he began to blow hard. The effort in being the aggressor was taking its toll. But he kept coming forward, swinging, missing mostly, but landing frequently enough to make none of the remaining rounds easy for Woods, who was feeling the pace too. Woods needed to pull it out in the last round and did, even scoring a near-knockdown, but Johnson was the more confident man when the final bell rang.

Tony Paolillo (USA) scored it Johnson's way, 116-112, but Albert Bennett (USA) went 115-113 for Woods. Howard Foster (England) had it 114-114. THE RING scored for Johnson, 115-113. A rematch seemed to be the likely call from the IBF. The referee was Ian John-Lewis (England).

Promoters: Dennis Hobson, Robert Waterman

(11-7-03)

Brian Doogan

Juan Manuel Marquez Tech. Win 7 Derrick Gainer

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Marquez' left glove caught Gainer's errant right jab so often that HBO's Jim Lampley likened it to a handpad session. Analyst Larry Merchant mused that if Gainer somehow managed to win the alphabet unification match, there's no way the IBF and WBA featherweight straps should be enticing enough to lure a top guy into a fight. Both were appropriate descriptions of how dismally unappealing Marquez-Gainer was.

Gainer's dreadful display of run-and-paw reluctance ended on a seventh-round accidental headbutt that forced the fight to the scorecards—to the delight of 9,000-plus at Van Andel Arena. The fans in Floyd Mayweather's hometown never thought they would see Gainer get close enough for a butt, and were anxious to get past this dullapalooza and move on to the main event of Mayweather vs. Phillip Ndou.

Judges Dave Hess (USA) and Steven Tarnow (USA) gave Marquez a 70-63 clean sweep. The shock of the evening was that John Parish Jr. (USA) somehow scored a round for Gainer on his 69-64 card, though the result still was a unanimous technical decision for Marquez.

The CompuBox illustration was telling: Gainer, purportedly the master boxer, landed one of 107 jabs—a connect rate of 93 hundredths of one percent. In all he landed just 16 punches, making the modest 51 punches landed by Marquez, 125¾, Mexico City, against the defensive Gainer seem productive.

The sight of that stark quantitative analysis probably was more gruesome, in retrospect, than the gash Gainer, 126, Pensacola, Florida, sustained near his left eye from the head clash. One might have expected Gainer, 31, to protest that he deserved to continue, with his cherished WBA bauble—and perhaps career viability—at stake. Instead, he told ringside physician Dr. Michael Sherbin that his vision was impaired, and referee Luis Pabon (Puerto Rico) stopped the bout at 2:37.

"I don't know why, but I just couldn't get anything going," said Gainer, 39-6-1 (24).

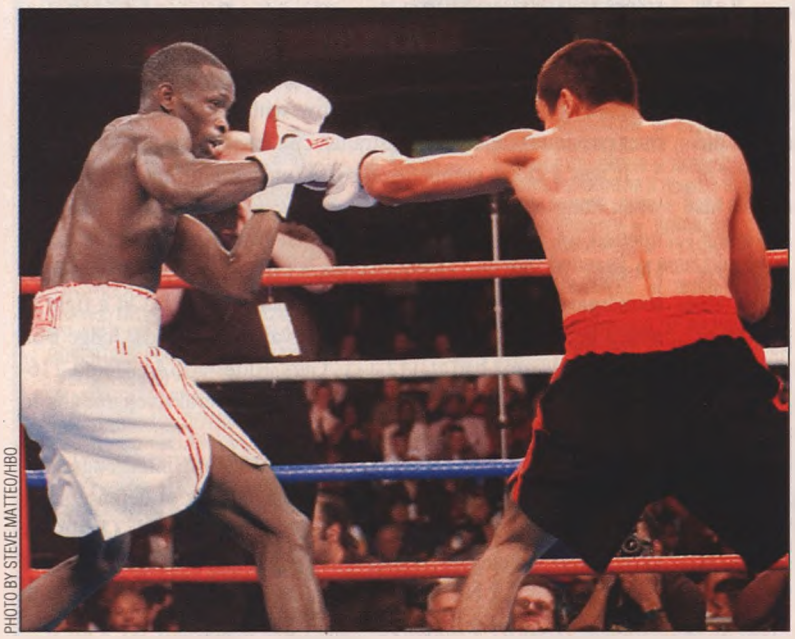

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

Gainer and Marquez play patty-cake with their jabs

Gainer withdrew from two previous bouts with defending IBF beltholder Marquez, including once with a pectoral injury 11 weeks before this rescheduled bout. Even when he found his way into the ring, he still was a no-show.

"There's no excuse. 'Smoke' just didn't show up. There's no explanation," said Lou DiBella, Gainer's promoter.

Marquez, 42-2 (33), stands as the division's logical top challenger to new champion Manny Pacquiao. But after a dreadful 1999 fight against Freddie Norwood, and then this, Marquez might be well advised to avoid left-handers in the future.

"I really expected a lot tougher fight than this. The guy just didn't want to fight," said Marquez, 30.

Promoters: Top Rank, DiBella Entertainment

(11-1-03)

David Mayo

Johnny Bredahl W 12 David Guerault

Copenhagen, Denmark: With his long jab and clever movement, Bredahl, 118, Denmark, comprehensively outpointed European champion Guerault, 117¾, France, at the KB Hallen to retain the WBA bantamweight title for the second time. Though presumably near the end of his career and perhaps even several years past his physical prime, Bredahl, at age 35, showed against the 30-year-old Guerault that he remains one of the finest fighters in the 118-pound division. Though top-level success came to him fairly late, he's doing a fine job of extending his stay.

His first two title challenges ended in defeat, by eighth-round stoppage against Wayne McCullough in December 1995 (the only stoppage defeat of his career) and on points against Paulie Ayala in March '00 (his only other defeat). At 33, he defeated Venezuela's Eidy Moya in April '02 to finally win a title belt and retained it later in the year against another Venezuelan, Leo Gamez. This was his first fight in 12 months, but he had plenty in the tank to take care of puffed-up flyweight Guerault.

In the opening round, Bredahl, 54-2 (26), hurt the Frenchman to the body and seemed to be on his way toward a stoppage victory. But he has stopped less than half of his opponents, and once more one of his bouts became an exercise in the finer arts as he moved and pecked and built up an unassailable lead. Guerault, 29-2 (16), kept it competitive to the end, but never threatened to take over.

Paul Thomas (England) scored it 117-110, Erkki Meronen (Finland) 118-111, and Henk Meijers (Holland) 114-113, all for Bredahl. THE RING scored 117-111 for Bredahl. The referee was Michael Ortega (USA).

Promoter: Mogens Palle

(10-25-03)

Brian Doogan

Michael Gomez KO 5 Alex Arthur

Edinburgh, Scotland: Born in the backseat of a car in Dublin, Ireland, and raised in an orphanage in Manchester, England, Gomez, 130, has lived a life of upheaval and uncertainty. An eighth-round stoppage defeat by London's Kevin Lear in June '02—his sec-

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Gomez nearly knocks Arthur's head off his shoulders

ond kayo loss in 16 months—had seemingly made certain a status in the scrap heap of British junior lightweights, but, before 4,000 raucous Scottish fans at the Meadowbank Stadium, he performed a remarkable resurrection. Gomez stopped hometown favorite Arthur, 130, in five thrilling rounds, some of the best seen in a British ring this year.

Having adopted the sobriquet "Amazin,'" Arthur was always vulnerable to the kind of chastening experience Gomez put him through on a night that was supposed to be a regal return to the city in which the newly crowned British super featherweight titleholder was born and bred. His preparation had been far from ideal. Freddie Roach, the American trainer he chose to work with after splitting with Peter Harrison, was unable to leave the camp of Manny Pacquiao, and Arthur, who lives with his wife and young son in Edinburgh, had to work with his old amateur trainer instead. His self-doubt became evident and Gomez seized on it from the outset, establishing a superiority that Arthur was able to challenge only intermittently.

A left hook in the opening 20 seconds stunned Arthur, who did well to stay on his feet. He found himself giving way for the rest of the round, though he was able to establish some rhythm with his jab. That jab became the key weapon in the second, as Gomez' aggression was expertly contained and Arthur appeared to have weathered the storm.

But the violence of the third will haunt him for as long as he remains a fighter. A left hook stiffened his legs as he changed strategy and elected to stand to-to-toe with his harder punching foe. What followed was frightening, an unanswered stream of left hooks that the 25-year-old Scot could find no way to avoid. He was being hit at will. Incredibly, he managed to remain upright, but this was not a fight in which he was expected to be relying on his will—his skill was supposed to be enough for Gomez. Yet at the end of the round, only his heart and chin were keeping him on his feet.

Close engagement—Gomez' territory unquestionably—was the story of the fourth round too. Arthur enjoyed some success, most notably with a left hook off the ropes that forced Gomez' knees to dip, but the Manchester man was the one in charge. Arthur's defense was almost non-existent, and by the start of the fifth, he had already taken far too many punches. Gomez, 26, sensed that Arthur's resistance was all but gone and continued his non-stop attack, even after sustaining a left hook to the body that left him gasping for breath.

But the gasps were soon for Arthur. A left hook knocked him down and, as he rose, he smiled into a TV camera, clearly not fully aware of his surroundings. Referee John Coyle (England) completed the eight-count, and Gomez quickly put him down again with two right hands. The referee could have stopped it at this point, but he signaled both men to fight on after Arthur, 16-1 (14), beat the count once again. Arthur marched forward bravely but inevitably into two more left hooks that sent him crashing onto his back, Coyle finally waving it off at the 2:58 mark with Arthur's face a crimson mess.

He needed oxygen in his corner as Gomez, 29-5 (19), celebrated wildly, the crowd stunned by the emphatic, unexpected defeat of their man. It will now take much to revive Arthur's career. He blamed a throat infection for the one-sidedness of his defeat and made a decision to work in Roach's gym in Los Angeles before his fights in the future. Gomez looked ahead to securing a title fight, though a rematch remains likely with both fighters promoted by Frank Warren.

Promoter: Sports Network

(10-25-03)

Brian Doogan

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam W 12 Hussein Hussein

Bangkok, Thailand: Since winning four of his first five title fights by knockout, WBC flyweight titlist Pongsaklek, 112, has mostly kept his kayo punch in his pocket. That trend continued at Lumphinee Stadium, where the Thailander extended his streak of distance title fights to four in a row with a unanimous decision over previously unbeaten Australian challenger Hussein, 112.

It was a close, competitive boxing match until the 11th round, when Pongsaklek, 26, scored the fight's only knockdown. He then opened up and made a sustained effort to finish off the taller Hussein, 28, but the challenger gutted it out. Still, that two-point round gave Pongsaklek the breathing room he needed in a fight in which he led by just a couple of points after 10 rounds. Judge Bob Logist (Belgium) had it 117-111, Gary Ritter (USA) scored 116-111, and Takeaki Kanaya (Japan) tallied several even rounds to come up with a 117-113 scorecard.

With the loss, Hussein dropped to 23-1 (17), while Pongsaklek moved to 49-2 (26) following his eighth successful defense since flattening Malcolm Tunacao for the belt in March '01. One week later, it was announced that the busy beltholder would have only a seven-week break between defenses, as a January 3 meeting with Masaki "Trash" Nakanuma in Japan was planned.

(11-14-03) ■

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New Face

(Continued from page 20)

lot of fights," Edouard recalled. "The joking made me colder and harder. It gave me a temper. I'd just go off on people all of the time. It didn't matter, whether it was a teacher, students, whoever it was."

Edouard lived in Jersey City, New Jersey, until his family moved to West Palm Beach, Florida, when he was 12. At the time, there was a large influx of Haitians moving to South Florida, and Edouard was under the impression he'd get a fresh start. He didn't. Being of Haitian origin opened another door for myopic people to probe.

"My parents still had a Haitian accent, and though I spoke English quite well, I was still fat," Edouard said. "So I had two things going against me: I was fat and I was Haitian, and that made me even angrier. That's when my temper really got out of control. I was fighting constantly.

"I got Haitian jokes, like people asking me if I can do voodoo. When it came to females, they'd call the house and hear my mother's Haitian accent, and they basically didn't want anything to do with me after that."

Edouard's behavior started to take dangerous turns in his mid-teens. At age 14, he was arrested for aggravated battery for stabbing a 17-year-old, and served a few months at a juvenile detention facility. Upon his release, Edouard pushed the limits again while still on probation. This time, he was expelled from school for throwing a book at a teacher—during a conference in the principal's office.

"The stabbing was over something stupid," Edouard recalled. "The funny thing is, I'm actually close friends now with the guy that I stabbed. We're business partners, and we do business all of the time. When I saw him a few years ago for the first time in a while, the first thing that came out of his mouth was, 'What happened that day?'

"The day I threw the book, that was stupid, too. My anger took over."

Edouard can look back on that time and laugh. He is light years now from the young man that he used to be. The Haitian Sensation will graduate from Palm Beach Atlantic University in May 2004 with a bachelor's degree in biblical studies, with the intention of moving forward and getting a Master's in counseling or psychology.

In the meantime, Edouard is serious about boxing, something he's been doing since he was 15. It was at that age that Edouard had a happenstance meeting in a barbershop with an amateur fighter who was getting his hair cut and talking about a fight that he had lost. Edouard, being a wise-ass, felt compelled to tell the fighter that he sucked because he lost.

That's when his life changed.

"I was fortunate, because the fighter was an older guy, and I didn't get my ass kicked," Edouard said, laughing. "He asked me if I fought, and what I knew about boxing. The guy wound up giving me the name of a local gym, where I could work out and box. The next day I was there."

Five months later, Edouard was involved in amateur tournaments, and within a year, national competitions. In '96, Edouard won the 16-and-under national PAL championship at 178 pounds.

"I still had a lot of anger then, but I started finding out how boxing disciplined me, and I found God and the Bible, and I began mentoring kids," Edouard said. "I knew there were a lot of young kids that were going through the same issues I went through. I fought with a passion. I fought to kill you, like I was fighting in the streets. It was great because I got to hit people for fun and not get yelled at or get in trouble for it."

There was a time when Edouard briefly soured on boxing. In '98, he tried to move down from 178 to 165 pounds and had a tough time adjusting to the weight loss. His goal was the 2000 Olympics, but a loss to eventual Olympian Jeff Lacy in a qualifier ended those hopes.

Something, however, kept gnawing at Edouard. Opponents he vanquished as an amateur kept popping up as pros on TV, so in '01, Edouard decided he would turn pro, too. He hired trainer Pete Brodsky out of West Palm Beach, made his pro debut in March '02, and has since latched on with veteran Philadelphia promoter J Russell Peltz.

"Daniel has potential," Peltz said. "He's young, but he has a good attitude. You find over the years that desire and attitude could mean everything. Without the right attitude and work ethic, you won't get anywhere. The mental aspect of boxing is so important."

Peltz was sold on Edouard by his strength and his tireless punching ability. While Edouard envisions winning a minor belt by mid-2004, Peltz says The Haitian Sensation can compete with any middleweight contender right now.

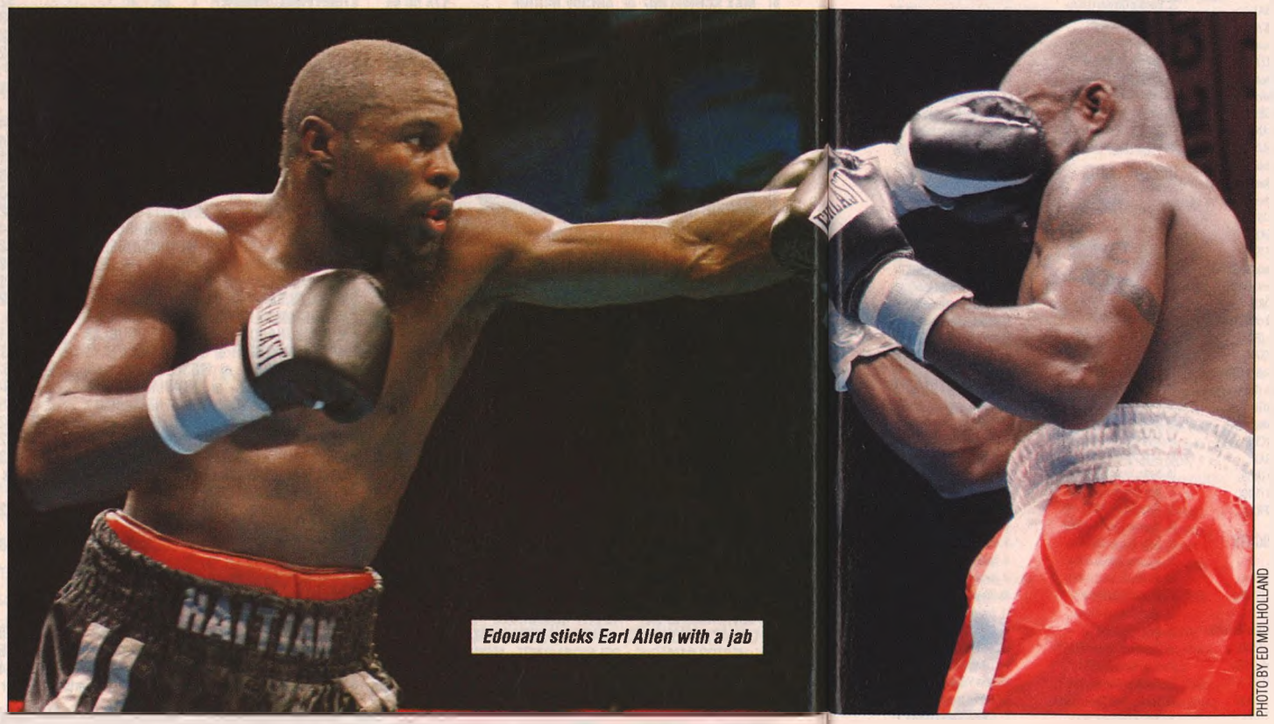
"He's certainly proven he can handle himself, sparring with Vernon Forrest and Jermain Taylor," said Peltz. "It's just a question of getting the right opportunities. I don't think there is anyone Daniel can't beat that Taylor has beaten already. It's not always who the best fighter is, it's about relationships."

One stumbling block could be Edouard's hands. He experienced nerve trouble in his right hand in his final two victories of '03, against Tim Shocks (W 8) and Miguel Espino (W 10).

"I live to see him have one fight where both of his hands are healthy," Peltz remarked.

At least his mind is healthy. Edouard has found a special place for Fat Albert in the recesses of his memory. The insecure kid has conquered his demons, contrived and otherwise.

"I consider myself very fortunate," Edouard said. "There are so many stories of people who go the other route. I made an early decision not to go that other route. Any decision you make in life, you're one decision away from disaster, or one decision away from greatness. I think I made the right decision." ■



Edouard sticks Earl Allen with a jab

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

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Alphabet Ratings

The Rankings of Boxing's Three International Governing Bodies

WBA RATINGS
(Ratings as of October 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Hasim Rahman (USA)
2. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
3. Corrie Sanders (SA)
4. John Ruiz (USA)
5. Mike Tyson (USA)
6. Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)
7. David Tua (NZ)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Joe Mesi (USA)
10. Nicolay Valuev (RUS)
11. Lamon Brewster (USA)
12. Evander Holyfield (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Jean Marc Mormeck (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Virgil Hill (USA)
4. O'Neil Bell (USA)
5. Luis Pineda (PAN)
6. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
7. Valery Brudov (RUS)
8. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
9. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
10. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
11. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
12. Alexander Petkovic (GER)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Silvio Branco (ITA)
1. Dariusz Michalczewski (GER)
2. Lou Del Valle (USA)
3. Mehdi Sahnoune (FRA)
4. Bruno Girard (FRA)
5. David Telesco (USA)
6. George Jones (USA)
7. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
8. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
9. Montell Griffin (USA)
10. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
11. Stipe Drews (CRO)
12. Laudelino Barrios (BRA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
Champ: Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
1. Vacant
2. Manuel Siaca (PR)
3. Mads Larsen (DEN)
4. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
5. Eric Lucas (CAN)
6. Antwun Echols (USA)
7. Byron Mitchell (USA)
8. Brian Magee (GB)
9. Danilo Haussler (GER)
10. Nordin Ben-Salah (NETH)
11. Charles Brewer (USA)
12. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
Champ: William Joppy (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Bert Schenk (GER)
3. Robert Allen (USA)
4. Maselino Masoe (AUSTRL)
5. Evans Ashira (DEN)
6. Howard Eastman (GB)
7. Kingsley Ikeke (NIG)
8. Jermain Taylor (USA)
9. Wayne Alexander (GB)
10. Marcos Silvano Diaz (ARG)
11. Kelly Pavlik (USA)
12. Raymond Joval (NETH)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Shane Mosley (USA)
Champ: Alejandro T. Garcia (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Travis Simms (USA)
3. Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
4. Fernando Vargas (USA)
5. Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
6. J.C. Candelo (COL)
7. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
8. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
9. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
10. Kassim Ouma (GHA)
11. Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)
12. Mikael Rask (DEN)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (CR)
Champ: Jose Rivera (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
4. Vernon Forrest (USA)
5. Michael Trabant (GER)
6. James Hare (GB)
7. Kermit Cintron (PR)
8. Farhad Bakirov (UZB)
9. Teddy Reid (USA)
10. Chris Smith (USA)
11. Hwanyung Park (KOR)
12. Alpaslan Aguzum (TUR)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
Champ: Vivian Harris (GUY)
1. Miguel Cotto (PR)
2. Ricky Hatton (GB)
3. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Arturo Gatti (USA)
6. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
7. Souleyman M'Baye (FRA)
8. Randall Bailey (USA)
9. Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)
10. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
11. Andreas Kotelnik (GER)
12. Terrance Cauthen (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Miguel Callist (PAN)
2. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
5. Lakva Sim (MON)
6. Prawet Singwangcha (THAI)
7. Courtney Burton (USA)
8. Michael Clark (USA)
9. Julio Diaz (MEX)
10. Steve Johnston (USA)
11. Billy Irwin (CAN)
12. Juan Diaz (USA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Acelino Freitas (BRA)
Champ: Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)
1. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
2. Randy Suico (PHIL)
3. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
4. Janos Nagy (HUN)
5. Michael Gomez (GB)
6. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)
7. Nobuhito Honmo (JAP)
8. Nate Campbell (USA)
9. Mike Anchondo (USA)
10. Diego Corrales (USA)
11. Steve Forbes (USA)
12. Edwin Valero (VEN)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
Champ: Chris John (INDO)
1. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
2. Injin Chi (KOR)
3. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
4. Derrick Gainer (USA)
5. Michael Brodie (GB)
6. Spend Abazi (DEN)
7. Victor Polo (COL)
8. Oscar Leon (COL)
9. William Abelyan (ARM)
10. Zahir Raheem (USA)
11. Orlando Salido (MEX)
12. Cyril Thomas (FRA)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Mahyar Monshipour (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Yoddamrong Sithyodthong (THAI)
3. Somsak Sithchachawan (THAI)
4. Tim Austin (USA)
5. Osamu Sato (JAP)
6. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
7. Yober Ortega (VEN)
8. Jose Rojas (VEN)
9. Paulie Ayala (USA)
10. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
11. Alejandro Barrera (MEX)
12. Shoji Kimura (JAP)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
1. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
2. Poongsawai Krachingdaen (THAI)
3. Sompichai Kratingdaeng (THAI)
4. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
5. Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)
6. Diego Morales (MEX)
7. Leo Gamez (VEN)
8. Mauricio Martinez (PAN)
9. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
10. Daniel Ponce DeLeon (MEX)
11. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
12. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Alexander Munoz (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Rogelio Galicia (PHIL)
3. Luis Bolano (COL)
4. Masaki Kawabata (JAP)
5. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
6. Fernando Montiel (MEX)
7. Jose Navarro (USA)
8. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
9. Martin Castillo (MEX)
10. Ricardo Cordova (PAN)
11. Gabula Vabaza (SA)
12. Cyril Bellanger (FRA)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Morel (USA)
1. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
2. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
3. Brahim Asloum (FRA)
4. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
5. Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)
6. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
7. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
8. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
9. Brian Viloria (USA)
10. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
11. Angel Priolo (COL)
12. Damaen Kelly (GB)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)
1. Vacant
2. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
3. Pichit C. Siriwat (THAI)
4. Edgar Velasquez (VEN)
5. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
6. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
7. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
8. Mhikiza Myekeni (SA)
9. Tatsuo Hayashida (JAP)
10. Yosam Choi (KOR)
11. Alex Sanchez (PR)
12. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)

MINIMUMWEIGHTS
Champ: Noel Arambulet (VEN)
1. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
2. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
3. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
4. Sithembele Kibiti (SA)
5. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)

WBC RATINGS
(Ratings as of November 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Lennox Lewis (GB)
1. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
2. Corrie Sanders (SA)
3. David Tua (NZ)
4. Joe Mesi (USA)
5. Mike Tyson (USA)
6. Juan Carlos Gomez (CUB)
7. Fres Oquendo (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)
10. Lamon Brewster (USA)
11. Hasim Rahman (USA)
12. John Ruiz (USA)
13. Faruq Saleem (USA)
14. Oliver McCall (USA)
15. Eliecer Castillo (CUB)
16. Jameel McCline (USA)
17. Sinan Samil San (TUR)
18. Dominick Guinn (USA)
19. Henry Akinwande (NIG)
20. Lance Whitaker (USA)
21. Danny Williams (GB)
22. Evander Holyfield (USA)
23. Jeremy Williams (USA)
24. Luan Krasniqi (GER)
25. Dimitry Bakhtov (KAZ)
26. Saul Montana (MEX)
27. Samuel Peter (NIG)
28. Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)
29. Peter Okhello (UGA)
30. Friday Ahunanya (NIG)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
1. O'Neil Bell (USA)
2. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
3. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
4. Pietro Aurino (ITA)
5. Luis Andres Pineda (PAN)
6. Alexander Petkovic (GER)
7. Rudiger May (GER)
8. Dale Brown (CAN)
9. Rydell Booker (USA)
10. Pavel Melkomian (RUS)
11. Krysztof Wlodarczyk (POL)
12. Sebastiaan Rothman (SA)
13. Glen Kelly (AUSTRL)
14. Virgil Hill (USA)
15. Kelvin Davis (USA)
16. Richard LaMontagne (USA)
17. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
18. Louis Azille (DR)
19. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
20. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
21. Ezra Sellers (USA)
22. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
23. Michael Simms (USA)
24. Mark Hobson (GB)
25. Vincenzo Rossitto (ITA)
26. Carlos Cruzat (CHI)
27. Felix Cora (USA)
28. Valery Brudov (RUS)
29. Jorge Kahwagi (MEX)
30. Madjid Zaim (FRA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
3. Stipe Drews (CRO)
4. Dariusz Michalczewski (GER)
5. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
6. Tomasz Adamek (POL)
7. Elvir Muriqi (ALB)
8. Montell Griffin (USA)
9. George Jones (USA)
10. Jesus Ruiz (MEX)
11. Eric Harding (USA)
12. Kamel Amrane (FRA)
13. Alejandro Lakatus (ROM)
14. Laudelino Barros (BRA)
15. Donnell Wiggins (USA)
16. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
17. Zsolt Erdei (HUN)
18. Matthew Barney (GB)
19. Darren Corbett (IRE)
20. Mehdi Sahnoune (FRA)
21. Tony Oakey (GB)
22. Derrick Harmon (USA)
23. Robert Stieglitz (GER)
24. Michael Rush (USA)
25. Richard Hall (JAM)
26. Hugo Garay (ARG)
27. Orlando Rivera (PR)
28. Elvis Michailenko (LAT)
29. Earl Morais (SA)
30. Manny Siaca (PR)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Markus Beyer (GER)
1. Eric Lucas (CAN)
2. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
3. Mads Larsen (DEN)
4. Danny Green (AUSTRL)
5. Danilo Haussler (GER)
6. Charles Brewer (USA)
7. Yoshinori Nishizawa (JAP)
8. Jeff Lacy (USA)
9. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
10. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
11. Brian Magee (GB)
12. Scott Pemberton (USA)
13. Antwun Echols (USA)
14. Robin Reid (GB)
15. Andre Thysse (SA)
16. Kabary Salem (EGY)
17. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
18. Henry Porras (CR)
19. Mario Veit (GER)
20. Jean Paul Mendy (FRA)
21. Victor Oganov (RUS)
22. Enrique Ornelas (USA)
23. Glenn Catley (GB)
24. Willie Stewart (USA)
25. Librado Andrade (USA)
26. Oscar Bravo (USA)
27. Carmine Tufano (USA)
28. Charles Adamu (GHA)
29. Vitaly Tsypko (UKR)
30. Jackson Chanet (FRA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Howard Eastman (GB)
2. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
3. Kuvanych Toygonbayev (UZB)
4. Jermain Taylor (USA)
5. Eric Mitchell (USA)
6. Evans Ashira (KEN)
7. Sergey Tatevosyan (RUS)
8. Kingsley Ikeke (CAN)
9. Sam Soliman (AUSTRL)
10. Wayne Alexander (GB)
11. Raymond Joval (HOL)
12. Robert Allen (USA)
13. Quentin Smith (USA)
14. Epifanio Mendoza (COL)
15. Jorge Sendra (SPA)
16. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
17. Bert Schenk (GER)
18. Tokunbo Olajide (CAN)
19. Mariano Carrera (ARG)
20. Kelly Pavlik (USA)
21. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
22. Yoshinori Araki (JAP)
23. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
24. Chad Dawson (USA)
25. Jerry Elliott (NIG)
26. Tokutaro Toyozumi (JAP)
27. Jesse Brinkley (USA)
28. Anthony Bonsante (USA)
29. James Obedi Toney (GHA)
30. Troy Rowland (USA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Shane Mosley (USA)
Interim Champ: Javier Castillejo (SPA)
1. Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
2. Fernando Vargas (USA)
3. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
4. Kassim Ouma (USA)
5. Alex Bunema (USA)
6. J.C. Candelo (COL)
7. Sergio Martinez (ARG)
8. Sergei Dzindziruk (UKR)
9. Kofi Jantuah (GHA)
10. Christophe Canclaux (FRA)
11. Raul Marquez (USA)
12. Marco Antonio Rubio (MEX)
13. Mehrdud Takaloo (GB)
14. Toshiharu Kaneyama (JAP)
15. Aslan Kodzoev (RUS)
16. Jamie Moore (GB)
17. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)
18. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
19. Mihaly Kotai (HUN)
20. Verno Phillips (USA)
21. Michael Rask (DEN)
22. Rodney Jones (USA)
23. Julio Garcia (CUB)
24. Angel Hernandez (MEX)
25. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
26. Nobuhiro Hishida (JAP)
27. Richard Williams (GB)
28. Carlos Bojorquez (USA)
29. Joachim Alcine (CAN)
30. Guillermo Saputo (ARG)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (NIC)
1. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
2. Vernon Forrest (USA)
3. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
4. Manuel Gomez (MEX)
5. Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)
6. Miguel Rodriguez (MEX)
7. Teddy Reid (USA)
8. Rafael Pineda (COL)
9. Hiroshi Watanabe (JAP)
10. Alpaslam Aguzum (TUR)
11. Jawaid Khaliq (GB)
12. Michel Trabant (GER)
13. Frederic Klose (FRA)
14. Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
15. Christian Bladt (DEN)
16. Ishe Smith (USA)
17. Jorge Lujan (ARG)
18. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
19. Rev Santillan (PHIL)
20. Joseph Makaringe (SA)
21. Ernesto Carmona (MEX)
22. James Hare (GB)
23. Kermit Cintron (USA)
24. Yuri Tsybenko (RUS)
25. Michael Santos (MEX)
26. Joel Julio (COL)
27. Farkhad Bakirov (UZB)
28. Michele Orlando (ITA)
29. Chris Smith (USA)
30. Christopher Henry (BAR)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Emeritus Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
2. Arturo Gatti (CAN)
3. Ricky Hatton (GB)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
6. Miguel Cotto (PR)
7. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
8. James Leija (USA)
9. Jason Cook (GB)
10. Francisco Bojado (MEX)
11. Junior Witter (GB)
12. Omar Weis (ARG)
13. Wilfredo Vilches (ARG)
14. Terrance Cauthen (USA)
15. Juan Valenzuela (MEX)
16. Kelson Pinto (BRA)
17. Carlos Maussa (COL)

18. DeMarcus Corley (USA)
19. Hector Camacho Jr. (PR)
20. Victor Kpadenue (GHA)
21. Eamonn Magee (GB)
22. Cesar Bazan (MEX)
23. Michael Stewart (USA)
24. Juan Carlos Rodriguez (MEX)
25. Alex Trujillo (PR)
26. Eduardo Gomez (MEX)
27. Muhammad Abdullaev (UZB)
28. Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)
29. Alvaro Aguilar (MEX)
30. Carlos Mairena (NIC)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Floyd Mayweather (USA)
1. Juan Lazcano (USA)
2. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
3. Kengo Nagashima (JAP)
4. Juan Diaz (MEX)
5. Phillip Ndou (SA)
6. Steve Johnston (USA)
7. Julio Diaz (USA)
8. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
9. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
10. Yuri Romanov (UKR)
11. Mat Zegan (POL)
12. Michael Clark (USA)
13. Dennis Laurente (PHIL)
14. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
15. Aldo Rios (ARG)
16. Michele Delli Paoli (ITA)
17. David Burke (GB)
18. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
19. Lamar Murphy (USA)
20. Cristian Bejarano (MEX)
21. Graham Earl (GB)
22. Billy Irwin (CAN)
23. Antonio Pitalua (COL)
24. Ricardo Silva (ARG)
25. Eleazar Contreras (USA)
26. Courtney Burton (USA)
27. Ameth Diaz (PAN)
28. Steve Quinonez (USA)
29. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
30. Rolando Reyes (USA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Jesus Chavez (USA)
1. Mzonke Fana (SA)
2. Randy Suico (PHIL)
3. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
4. Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)
5. Boris Sinitsin (RUS)
6. Zahir Raheem (USA)
7. Mike Anchondo (USA)
8. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
9. Nobuto Honmo (JAP)
10. Ryuhei Sugita (JAP)
11. Diego Corrales (USA)
12. Janos Nagy (HUN)
13. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)
14. Fernando Trejo (MEX)
14. Nate Campbell (USA)
15. Justin Juuko (UGA)
16. Goyo Vargas (MEX)
17. Nate Campbell (USA)
18. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
19. Orlando Salido (MEX)
20. Manuel Bocanegra (MEX)
21. Steve Luevano (USA)
22. Michael Gomez (GB)
23. Jose Cotto (PR)
24. Cesar Soriano (MEX)
25. Miguel Angel Huerta (MEX)
26. Craig Docherty (GB)
27. Alex Arthur (GB)
28. Daniel Attah (NIG)
29. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
30. Daniel Dominguez (MEX)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Emeritus Champ: Erik Morales (MEX)
1. Injin Chi (KOR)
2. Michael Brodie (GB)
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
5. Rocky Juarez (USA)
6. Cyril Thomas (FRA)
7. William Abelyan (USA)
8. Spend Abazi (DEN)
9. Humberto Soto (MEX)
10. Hector Velazquez (MEX)
11. Guty Espadas (MEX)
12. Juan Carlos Ramirez (MEX)
13. Luis Fuente (MEX)
14. Osamu Sato (JAP)
15. Valdemir Pereira (BRA)
16. Whyber Garcia (PAN)
17. Derrick Gainer (USA)
18. Takafumi Ndlovu (SA)
19. Jorge Solis (MEX)
20. Nicky Cook (GB)
21. Manuel Calvo (SPA)
22. Scott Harrison (SCO)
23. Vuyani Bungu (SA)
24. Juan Gerardo Cabrera (ARG)
25. Wayne McCullough (IRE)
26. Ismael Gonzalez (MEX)
27. Fernando Velardez (MEX)
28. Dainoshin Kuma (JAP)
29. Eiichi Sugama (JAP)
30. Carlos Gamez (MEX)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar Larios (MEX)
1. Napapol Kiattisakchocchoi (THAI)
2. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
3. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
4. Shigeru Nakazato (JAP)
5. Akihiro Kanai (JAP)
6. Jose Rojas (VEN)
7. Daniel Ponce (MEX)
8. Yoshikane Nakajima (JAP)
9. Jimrex Jaca (PHIL)
10. Willie Jorrin (USA)
11. Paulie Ayala (USA)
12. Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)
13. David Donis (USA)
14. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
15. Jorge Linares (VEN)
16. Hector Julio Avila (DR)
17. Manabu Fukushima (JAP)
18. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
19. Art Simonyan (USA)
20. Masakazu Sugawara (JAP)
21. Junichi Watanabe (JAP)
22. Marcos Licona (MEX)
23. Pedrito Laurente (PHIL)
24. Esham Pickering (GB)
25. Masanori Sugita (JAP)
26. Eduardo Garcia (MEX)
27. Miguel Mallon (SPA)
28. Sergio Medina (ARG)
29. Celestino Caballero (PAN)
30. Fernando Beltran Jr. (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)
1. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
2. Diego Morales (MEX)
3. Genaro Garcia (USA)
4. Hozumi Hasegawa (JAP)
5. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
6. Julio Zarate (MEX)
7. Jhonny Gonzalez (MEX)
8. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
9. Mauricio Martinez (PAN)
10. Vusi Malinga (SA)
11. David Guerault (FRA)
12. Noel Wilders (GB)
13. Tim Austin (USA)
14. Julio Cesar Avila (MEX)
15. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
16. Pete Frissina (USA)
17. Moises Castro (NIC)
18. Steve Molitor (CAN)
19. Jorge Lacierva (MEX)
20. Saenghiran Lookbanyai (THAI)
21. Seungsok Chae (KOR)
22. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
23. Miguel Angel Munguia (MEX)
24. Sasha Baktin (RUS)
25. Wladimir Sidorenko (UKR)
26. Akihiko Nago (JAP)
27. Rogelio Galicia (PHIL)
28. Nathan Sting (AUSTRL)
29. Silence Mabuza (SA)
30. Roger Gonzalez (MEX)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Masamori Tokuyama (JAP)
1. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
2. Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)
3. Luis Bolano (COL)
4. Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)
5. Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)
6. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
7. Jose Navarro (USA)
8. Fernando Montiel (MEX)
9. Martin Castillo (MEX)
10. Peter Culshaw (GB)
11. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
12. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
13. Eiji Kojima (JAP)
14. Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)
15. Masaki Kawabata (JAP)
16. Ricardo Cordoba (PAN)
17. Felix Machado (VEN)
18. Oscar Andrade (MEX)
19. Sergio Perez (MEX)
20. Ivan Hernandez (MEX)
21. Jose Beranza (MEX)
22. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
23. Cyril Bellanger (FRA)
24. Shin Ogata (JAP)
25. Karim Quibir (SPA)
26. Jason Booth (GB)
27. Cuauhtemoc Vargas (MEX)
28. Sergio Santillan (ARG)
29. Neddy Garcia (USA)
30. Alex Becerra (USA)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)
1. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
2. Luis Maldonado (MEX)
3. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
4. Brian Viloria (USA)
5. Noriyuki Komatsu (JAP)
6. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
7. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
8. Jair Jimenez (COL)
9. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
10. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
11. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
12. Vic Darchinyan (AUSTRL)
13. Brahim Asloum (FRA)
14. Koji Koyama (JAP)
15. Masaki Nakanuma (JAP)
16. Diosdado Gabi (PHIL)
17. Angel Priolo (COL)
18. Jose Lopez Bueno (SPA)
19. Daisuke Naito (JAP)
20. Damaen Kelly (GB)
21. Carlos Bouchan (MEX)
22. Antonio E. Medina (ARG)
23. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
24. Mimoun Chent (FRA)
25. Steffen Norskov (DEN)
26. Yusuke Morishima (JAP)
27. Julio Ler (ARG)
28. Gabriel Elizondo (USA)
29. Wladimir Sidorenko (UKR)
30. Jose Araiza (MEX)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Jorge Arce (MEX)
1. Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)
2. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
3. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
4. Yosam Choi (KOR)
5. Tatsuo Hayashida (JAP)
6. Roberto Vazquez (PAN)
7. Manuel Vargas (MEX)
8. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
9. Masato Hatakeyama (JAP)
10. Jesus Martinez (MEX)
11. Ulises Solis (MEX)
12. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
13. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
14. Omar Nino (MEX)
15. Sarikalek O. Eakarin (THAI)
16. Monelisi Myekeni (SA)
17. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
18. Hugo Cazares (MEX)
19. Nerys Espinoza (NIC)
20. Carlos Fajardo (NIC)
21. Rafael Lozano (SPA)
22. Juan Centeno (NIC)
23. Bert Batawang (PHIL)
24. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
25. Ernesto Castro (NIC)
26. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
27. Jose Lopez (PR)
28. Liborio Romero (MEX)
29. Jun Kitano (JAP)
30. Angelo Dottin (PAN)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)
1. Isaac Bustos (MEX)
2. Heriberto Gijon (PHIL)
3. Eagle Akakura (JAP)
4. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
5. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
6. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
7. Satoshi Kogumasaka (JAP)
8. Mohamed Rachman (INDO)
9. Juan Palacios (NIC)
10. Sithembele Kibiti (SA)
11. Edgar Cardenas (MEX)
12. Khulile Makeba (SA)
13. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
14. Oledong Sithsanerchai (THAI)
15. Armand de la Cruz (PHIL)
16. Hiroyuki Abe (JAP)
17. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
18. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
19. Lorenzo Trejo (MEX)
20. Omar Soto (MEX)
21. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
22. Francisco Rosas (MEX)
23. Sizwe Sinyabi (SA)
24. Namchai Ratanachaigym (THAI)
25. Pornsawan Porpramook (THAI)
26. Iwan Key (INDO)
27. Teruo Misawa (JAP)
28. Gerardo Verde (MEX)
29. Juan Landaeta (VEN)
30. Makoto Suzuki (JAP)

IBF RATINGS
(Ratings as of November 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Chris Byrd (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. David Tua (NZ)
4. Fres Oquendo (USA)
5. Hasim Rahman (USA)
6. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
7. Jameel McCline (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)
10. John Ruiz (USA)
11. Evander Holyfield (USA)
12. Mike Tyson (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: James Toney (USA)
1. Kelvin Davis (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
4. Ezra Sellers (USA)
5. Virgil Hill (USA)
6. O'Neil Bell (USA)
7. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
8. Alex Petkovic (RUS)
9. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
10. Dale Brown (CAN)
11. Louis Azille (USA)
12. Ravea Springs (USA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Clinton Woods (GB)
4. Antonio Tarver (USA)
5. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
6. Montell Griffin (USA)
7. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
8. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
9. Dariusz Michalczewski (POL)
10. Richard Hall (USA)
11. George Jones (USA)
12. Stipe Drews (CRO)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Mads Larsen (DEN)
4. Charles Brewer (USA)
5. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
6. Danilo Haussler (GER)
7. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
8. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
9. Jeff Lacy (USA)
10. Mario Veit (GER)
11. Byron Mitchell (USA)
12. Antwun Echols (USA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Robert Allen (USA)
2. Raymond Joval (HOL)
3. Howard Eastman (GB)
4. Evans Ashira (GUY)
5. Bert Schenk (GER)
6. Derrell Coley (USA)
7. Jermain Taylor (USA)
8. Bea Diallo (LIB)
9. Sam Soliman (AUSTRL)
10. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
11. Hector Velazco (ARG)
12. Aaron Mitchell (USA)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Winky Wright (USA)
1. Kassim Ouma (USA)
2. J.C. Candelo (USA)
3. Verno Phillips (USA)
4. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
5. Vernon Forrest (USA)
6. Angel Hernandez (USA)
7. Julio Garcia (USA)
8. Fernando Vargas (USA)
9. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
10. Emmett Linton (USA)
11. Alex Bunema (USA)
12. Bronco McKart (USA)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Cory Spinks (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. James Hare (ENG)
4. Jose Celaya (USA)
5. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
6. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
7. Teddy Reid (USA)
8. Rafael Pineda (COL)
9. Kermit Cintron (USA)
10. Michele Trabant (GER)
11. Christian Bladt (DEN)
12. Joe Hutchinson (USA)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
4. Omar Weis (ARG)
5. Arturo Gatti (USA)
6. Mike Stewart (USA)
7. Miguel Cotto (USA)
8. Paul Spadafora (USA)
9. James Leija (USA)
10. DeMarcus Corley (USA)
11. Lovemore Ndou (AUSTRL)
12. Terrance Cauthen (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
2. Levander Johnson (USA)
3. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
4. Juan Lazcano (USA)
5. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
6. Julio Diaz (USA)
7. Courtney Burton (USA)
8. Michael Clark (USA)
9. Angel Manfredy (USA)
10. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
11. Steve Johnston (USA)
12. Victoriano Sosa (DR)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Carlos Hernandez (USA)
1. Joel Casamayor (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Steve Forbes
4. Diego Corrales (USA)
5. David Santos (USA)
6. Phillip Ndou (SA)
7. Sirimongkol Singmanassak (THAI)
8. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
9. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
10. Nate Campbell (USA)
11. Janos Nagy (HUN)
12. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. William Abelyan (USA)
5. Orlando Salido (MEX)
6. Michael Brodie (ENG)
7. In Jin Chi (KOR)
8. Zahir Raheem (USA)
9. Rocky Juarez (USA)
10. Victor Polo (COL)
11. Fahprakorb Rakkiatgym (THAI)
12. Humberto Soto (MEX)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)
1. Jose Luis Valbuena (ARG)
2. Vacant
3. Paulie Ayala (USA)
4. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
5. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
6. David Donis (USA)
7. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
8. Fernando Velardez (USA)
9. Willie Jorrin (USA)
10. Art Simonyan (USA)
11. Diego Morales (MEX)
12. Fahsung 3K Battery (THAI)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Rafael Marquez (MEX)
1. Pete Frissina (USA)
2. Tim Austin (USA)
3. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
4. Genaro Garcia (MEX)
5. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
6. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
7. David Guerault (FRA)
8. Jorge Lacierva (USA)
9. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
10. Mauricio Pastrana (PAN)
11. Jose Aguiniga (USA)
12. Mauricio Martinez (PAN)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Luis Perez (NIC)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Felix Machado (VEN)
4. Luis Bolano (COL)
5. Martin Castillo (MEX)
6. Peter Culshaw (ENG)
7. Jose Navarro (USA)
8. Angel Priolo (COL)
9. Fernando Montiel (MEX)
10. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
11. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
12. Shoji Kimura (JAP)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Irene Pacheco (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Vic Darchinian (AUSTRL)
4. Hussein Hussein (LEB)
5. Jair Jimenez (COL)
6. Damaen Kelly (GB)
7. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
8. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
9. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
10. Luis Maldonado (MEX)
11. Masaki Kawabata (JAP)
12. Wandee Chareon (THAI)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Burgos (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Fahlan Sakreerin (THAI)
4. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
5. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
6. Alexander Sanchez (PR)
7. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
8. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
9. Tatsuo Hatashida (JAP)
10. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
11. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
12. Mbikiza Myekeni (SA)

MINI FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Daniel Reyes (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Muhammad Rachman (INDO)
4. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
5. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
6. Edgar Cardenas (MEX)
7. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
8. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
9. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
10. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
11. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
12. Eriberto Gejon (PHIL)

CLASSIC

From THE RING, November 1935

LOUIS' RISE REVISES AN OLD TOPIC

Does the manager make the fighter or the fighter make himself? Clever handling has brought The Brown Bomber to the top

By Nat Fleischer

(Editor's Note: This is a condensed version.)

How often have you heard it said, when a fighter comes along to gain the fistic spotlight, that his rise was due to the skilful management of the man at the helm—the manager. In the days when Jack Kearns handled the affairs of Jack Dempsey; Billy Gibson brought Benny Leonard to the front and later took charge of Gene Tunney; Bill Brady, Jack Curley, and other ring notables directed the business of such stars as Jim Corbett, Jim Jeffries, George Gardiner, Jim Flynn, and others, it was an accepted axiom that the manager made the fighter. Of course, to some extent this statement was true, and for a time, one wouldn't care to argue that anyone other than the mentor could have brought a fighter to the top.

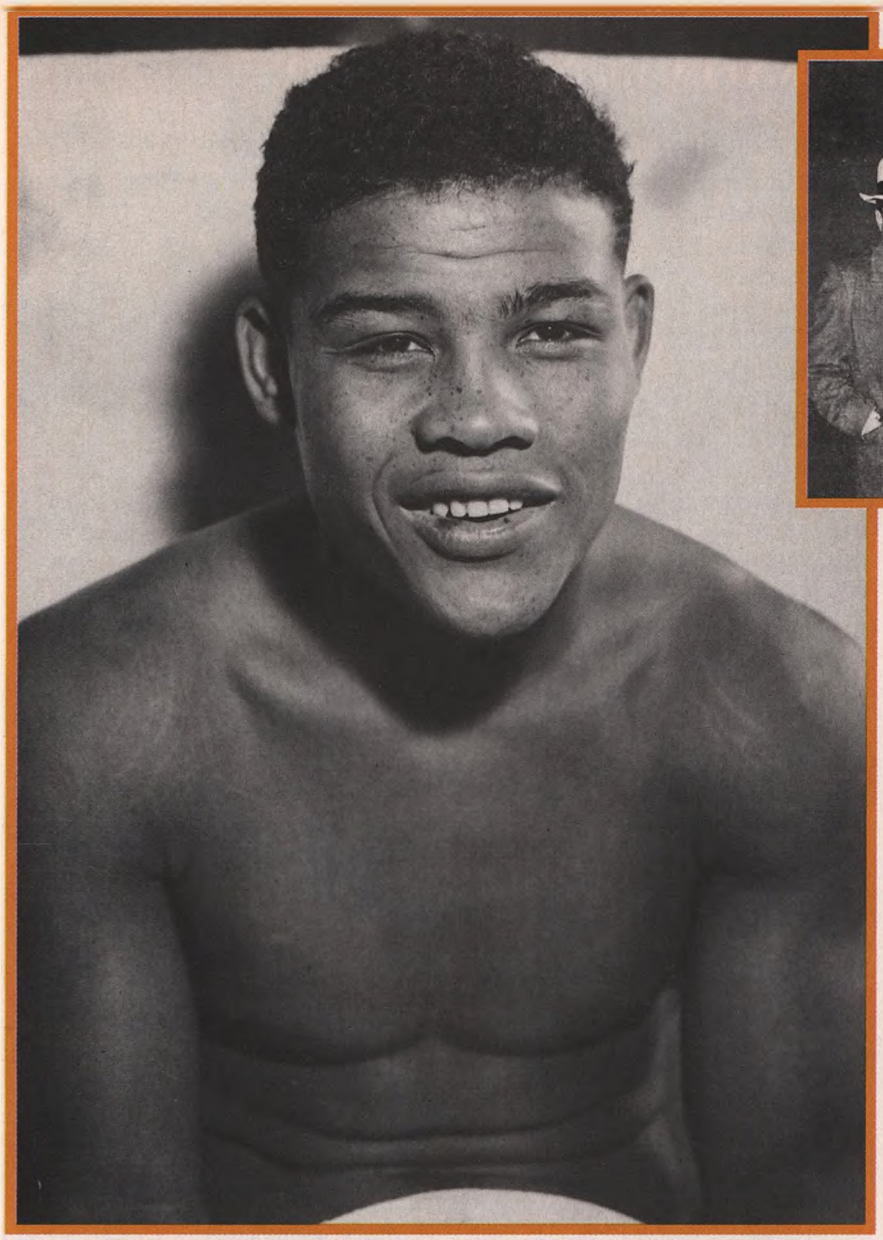
It was the opinion—and even to this date you cannot alter that so far as some fans and critics are concerned—that the proper guidance in his matches was what brought success to the battler.

If you go through the records of our leading fight figures of the last 30 years, you will find that almost without an exception, the best of the managers, those whose charges reached the highest rung in their chosen profession, simply wouldn't take any chances against sending their boys in to fight an opponent who, for one reason or another, seemed to have any chance of whipping their real ticket. Even to this date, you often find a so-called smart manager refusing this bout and that because he figures his boy might meet with defeat.

Unfortunately, we must go to press with this issue two weeks before the Joe Louis-Max Baer fight takes place, but even if Louis is defeated—something I cannot conceive—he will bring up again that much discussed query, "Does the manager make the fighter or does the fighter make himself?" By way of satisfying those of my readers who have flooded me with letters asking who I select in the battle, which will be over before this appears, I go on record here with the prediction that Louis will win by a knockout and within five rounds. If Louis should win, as I confidently expect him to, then the discussion of fighter and manager will come up stronger than ever.

Remember the arguments that were waged when Kearns and Dempsey quit their partnership? The general trend favored Kearns, who, it was pointed out, had brought Dempsey up from a ham-and-egg stage to the world title and the million-dollar gate. However, without Dempsey's magnetism, Kearns would have been at a loss to carry on his great ballyhoo. But without Kearns, Dempsey's prowess would have gone unsung and he would have been far from a million-dollar fighter. That Dempsey was able to get more than $2-million after he split with Kearns was due to the fact that "Manassa Jack" already had been built up into a tremendous attraction.

I do not want to take any credit from Dempsey, a fighter whom I regard as one of the greatest of all-time, but I cannot make myself believe that without the expert services, the keen imagination, and the powerful selling ability of Kearns, Dempsey would have succeeded



Joe Louis' rapid rise through the heavyweight ranks broached an old argument: Was it Louis' ability that allowed him to climb so quickly, or was it the shrewd managing of Julian Black (left) and John Roxborough (right)?

to the point he did. Therefore, in his case, I say the manager made the fighter.

Now let us take the case of Joe Louis, the latest fistic phenom who has attracted worldwide attention and about whom many queries have reached me asking, "Do you think that Louis would have reached his present stage if John Roxborough and Julian Black had not been his managers?"

These are typical of many letters, and it is for the purpose of answering those questions that this article has been written. Let us see how far Louis would have progressed, or might have progressed, under other handling.

Louis had to be something of a superman to acquire the greatness and the prominence that have come to him in less than one year's professional activity. Yet would that, alone, have enabled Louis to travel to the heights? My answer is no.

As in the case of Kearns and Dempsey, it is my opinion that the managers of Louis are largely responsible for his present status. True, he is a great fighter, one of the best I have seen in my 30 years association with the boxing game. But Louis' mentors, Julian Black and John Roxborough, have had a part in the career of Louis that few other managers would have played.

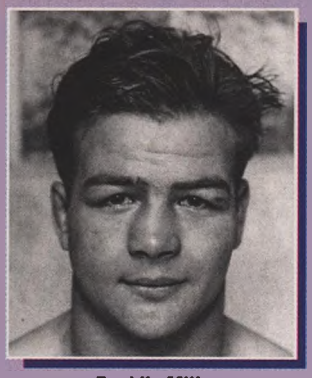
As I stated early in this article, the average manager tries to pick soft spots for his boy, especially where a lad shows any promise and is still regarded as an uncertainty. They nurse the boy along, as has been the case with Buddy Baer and was the case with Jack Doyle and Primo Carnera, with the result that instead of their boy gaining the necessary experience, even though at the expense of an occasional defeat, they pit their boy against a sure thing and then go out bragging about the great prospect they have.

Not so with Black and Roxborough! They were told by that clever veteran of the old school, Jack Blackburn, that they had a diamond in the rough in Joe Louis and rather than waste time having Louis work his way to the top over setups, they decided that they would soon find out for themselves if Blackburn's judgment was correct. They informed me that their actions were impelled by the desire to learn quickly whether Louis was "there" or not. In short, they didn't want to waste valuable time.

How many other managers would have done the same thing? I venture to say that not one out of 200 I can name would have acted as these managers did. They sent Louis against fighters of far more experience, boxers whom the average managers would have shunted aside for fear that such a bout would have halted Louis' climb.

In several matches the Louis followers as well as fight critics severely criticized the managers for arranging them, because they felt that Louis needed more experience and that such bouts would prove the

THE RING RATINGS, November 1935



Freddie Miller

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jimmy Braddock
1. Max Baer
2. Joe Louis
3. Max Schmeling
4. Hank Hankinson
5. Ford Smith
6. Walter Neusel
7. Buddy Baer
8. Tommy Loughran
9. Art Lasky
10. King Levinsky

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Bob Olin
1. Maxie Rosenbloom
2. Al McCoy
3. John Henry Lewis
4. Tony Shucco
5. Ambrose Palmer
6. Joe Knight
7. Adolf Heuser
8. Jock McAvoy
9. Al Gainer
10. Ray Actis

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Marcel Thil
1. Lou Brouillard
2. Freddie Steele
3. Paul Pirrone
4. Babe Risko
5. Teddy Yarosz
6. Jack Gibbons
7. Frank Battaglia
8. Oscar Rankins
9. Young Stubley
10. Ken Overlin

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Barney Ross
1. Jimmy McLarnin
2. Bep Van Klaveren
3. Kid Azteca
4. Eddie Kid Wolfe
5. Jack Carroll
6. Harry Dublinsky
7. Ceferino Garcia
8. Al Manfredo
9. Jimmy Leto
10. Teddy Loder

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Tony Canzoneri
1. Lou Ambers
2. Cleto Locatelli
3. Wesley Ramey
4. Frankie Klick
5. Tiger Humery
6. Charley Burns
7. Al Roth
8. Joe Ghnouly
9. Leo Rodak
10. Charley Gomer

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Freddie Miller
1. Maurice Holtzer
2. Henry Armstrong
3. Young Casanova
4. Fillo Echeverria
5. Mexican Joe Rivers
6. Baby Arizmendi
7. Mike Belloise
8. Petey Sarron
9. Frankie Covelli
10. Johnny Pena

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Baltasar Sangchili
1. Louis Salica
2. Sixto Escobar
3. Midget Wolgast
4. Bobby Leyvas
5. Young Tommy
6. Pablo Dano
7. Indian Quintana
8. Speedy Dado
9. Little Pancho
10. Star Frisco

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. Benny Lynch
2. Jackie Brown
3. Small Montana
4. Joe Mendiola
5. Maurice Huguenin
6. Valentin Anglemann
7. Jim Campbell
8. Tommy Pardoe
9. Phil Milligan
10. Bobby Magee

undoing of "The Brown Bomber." But instead of getting a setback, Louis gained experience and kept winning his bouts until the fistic world began to realize that here was not an ordinary fighter, but a superhuman battler.

Would that have been the case had Black and Roxborough faltered and accepted the general line of managerial reasoning? You know the answer. I have the argument presented by some of the veteran managers that it was the experience of Louis' managers that caused them virtually "to toss Louis to the wolves," as the parlance of the ring has it, but if you talk to Black and Roxborough and their faithful trainer of Louis, Blackburn, they will all tell you that it was faith in the ability of the Detroit boy that caused them to pit him against tough pro talent in the first year of his professional career after having won 54 amateur bouts.

So you see what part a manager can play in the rise of his warrior. Of course, unless a fighter has some great fistic asset, as did Dempsey and as has Louis, no amount of managerial maneuvering can place him in the spot where Louis finds himself today. The fact remains that at this writing, Louis finds himself within a step of a world championship fight, with only Jimmy Braddock to overcome.

If Louis gains the crown, he will be immortalized beside such great holders of the heavyweight title as John L. Sullivan, Bob Fitzsimmons, Corbett, Jeffries, Jack Johnson, Tunney, and Dempsey. And when that happens, I suppose the arguments will wage stronger than ever, "Did

What would legendary heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey have become if not for manager Jack Kearns? The Ring founder Nat Fleischer reasons that without the keen selling ability of Kearns, "Manassa Jack" might not have become a million-dollar fighter.

Black and Roxborough make Louis or did Louis make himself?"

Suffice it to say that managers and fighter are on top today, each with a fortune within reach and no telling when the money will stop flowing into their coffers. I predict that even after Joe passes from the pugilistic picture, this quartet—Black, Roxborough, Louis, and Blackburn will continue to be discussed among fight fans.

Until they presented Louis to the hungry fight public that had anxiously been awaiting a revival of interest in the fight game after four lean depression years, all except Blackburn were strangers to the fight game. They each had had some experience in amateur sports, but knew nothing of the inner workings of professional boxing with its strange machinations and its intrigues.

They knew that in Joe Louis, they had a boy who from all appearances looked and acted like a good fighter, and they were willing to give time toward promoting him. But how? That was the stumbling block.

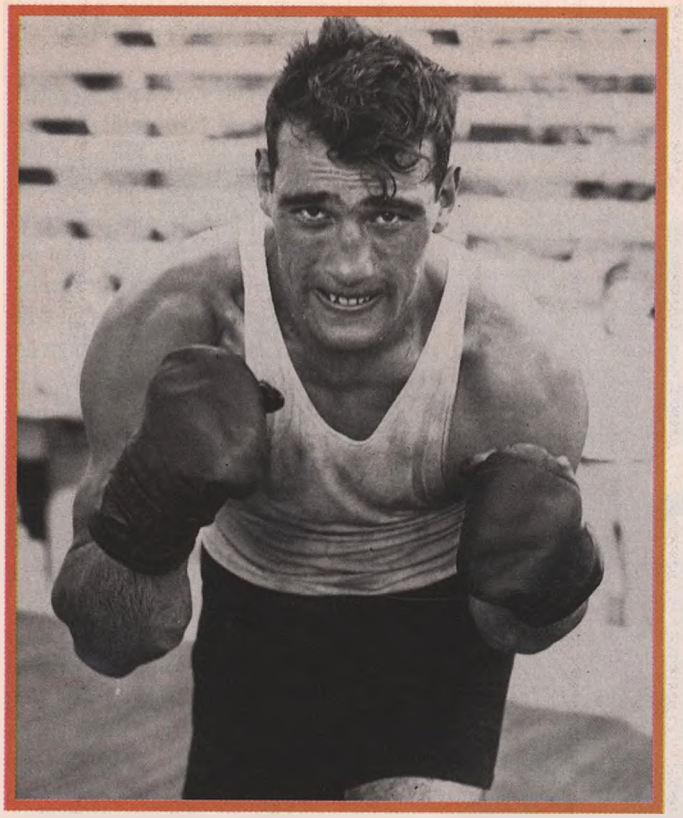
They simply could not do that by themselves because they fully realized their shortcomings. They had heard a lot of talk about the mediocrity of the fight field and they figured that if Louis could deliver the goods as they expected he would, he not only would pull the sport out of its depression, but would make plenty of money for all hands. Both Black and Roxborough are men of high finance. They have dabbled in big money for many years and they knew in Louis they possessed a magnet, provided he would come through.

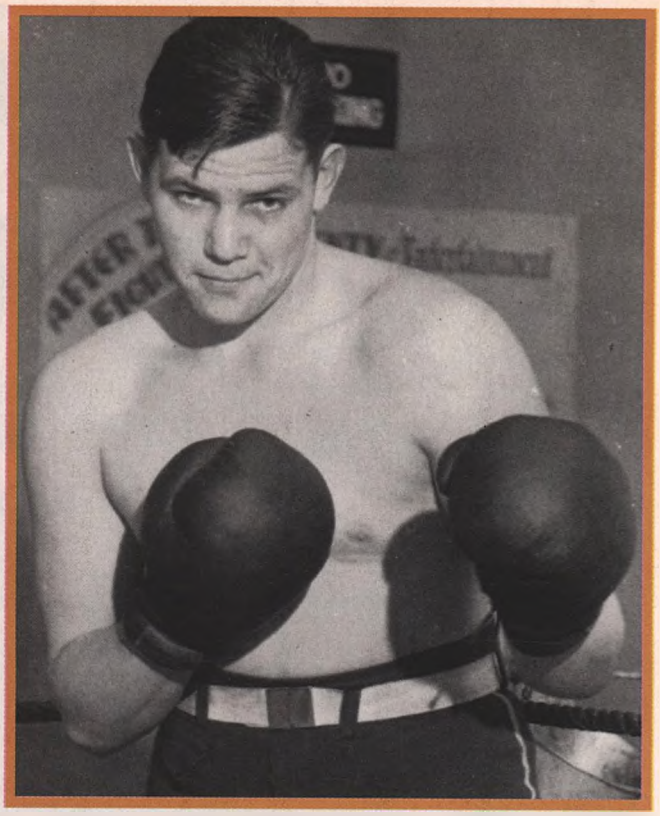
They decided they would invest their money in Louis, and by caring for him and assuring him a good livelihood while he was tuning up for the day when the coin would be rolling into the coffers, they could get Louis to do just as they wanted him to. There was a big chance to regain that investment many times over if Joe made good, and not once during the early stages of The Brown Bomber's career did their faith in the investment waver.

From the very start, they were met with many hazards, but Black and Roxborough are two shrewd businessmen, and hazards were not the unusual thing in their line of business. They had been taking big chances all their lives.

The first stage in the development of Louis was in securing the services of Blackburn, with whom they were acquainted and who they knew was one of the best ringmen of the old school—a scientific boxer, a good teacher, and a jovial fellow—just the kind of tutor they required for the gloomy, poker-faced Louis. They knew that Blackburn had developed two former great little champions, Sammy Mandell and Bud Taylor, and figured that there was no reason why Blackburn, without any outside interference, could not iron out the rough spots in Louis and develop a third champion.

For a time, Black and Roxborough found some difficulty in getting Blackburn to take charge because the monetary inducement was none too big at the start and also because he was reluctant to handle a Negro fighter, even though he is a member of that race. His reason was simple. He argued that George Godfrey, Harry Wills, and other good heavyweights could only go so far in their championship





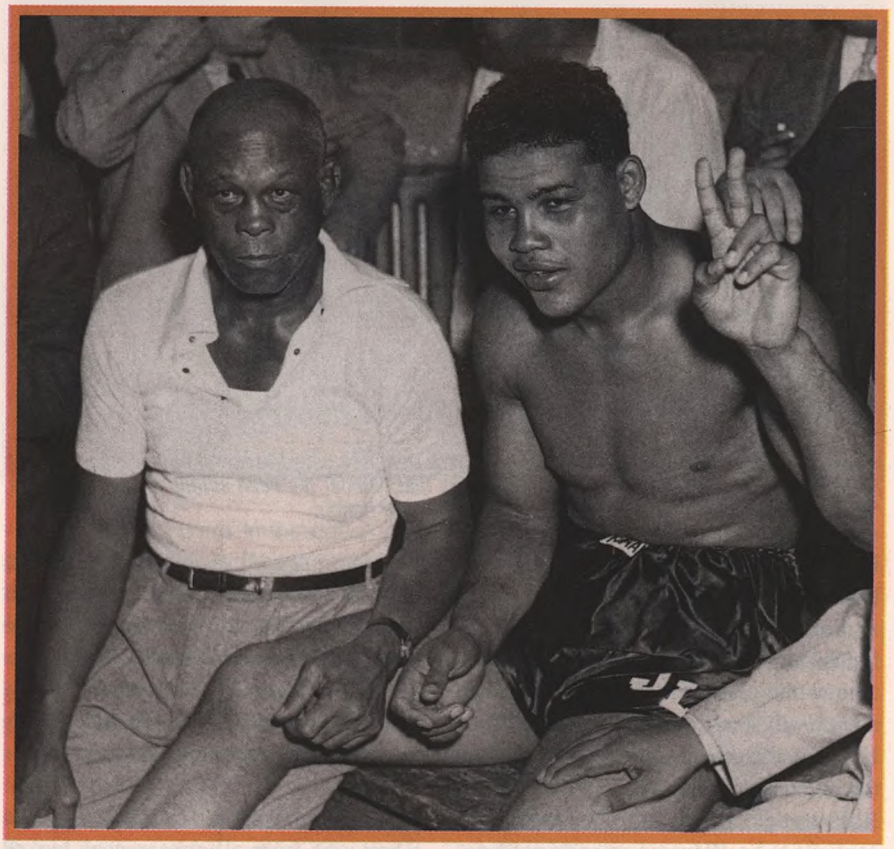
Some fighters, such as Primo Carnera (left) and Buddy Baer (right), have had managers build their records through setups, nursing their fighters along for a title shot. The end result was that these fighters lacked the necessary experience when facing elite heavyweights.

quest and that the greatest hazard a Negro heavy had to overcome was race prejudice. But a little persuasion and Blackburn accepted the assignment, and he has never regretted it.

He was only a trainer, however, and he would do the best he could. Black and Roxborough would be the business agents and make the matches. That they did. For five months they signed Louis to meet this fellow and that. They were not great fighters Louis was meeting, but they were far from being chumps. Louis' feat of scoring eight knockouts in 10 starts started the fight world talking. A lot of shrewd, clever managers marveled at the performances of the lad who had not yet reached his majority. They began to take notice.

Then one day it was announced that Joe Louis was matched to meet Charley Massera, a husky, clever boxer and good hitter. Those wise, clever managers shook their heads.

Right there started the controversies about the managers being the necessary quality to bring a fighter to the front. They saw the downthrow of a great prospect, just because Black and Roxborough knew no better.



The first step Black and Roxborough needed to take in developing Louis was securing veteran trainer Jack Blackburn. At first, Blackburn balked at the invitation, as he was reluctant to handle a Negro fighter due to the possible racial roadblocks to a title shot.

As Louis readied himself to take on Max Baer, the question remained: Was it Louis, or it was the managerial duo of Roxborough and Black (right), that enabled "The Brown Bomber" to climb so high so fast?

"They're rushing that boy too fast," was the comment of one of those critics. "Managers like Sammy Pian, Billy Gibson, Doe Bagley, Jack Kearns, Billy Delaney would never think of doing something like that. When a fellow like Massera would be offered them for their man, they would have said, 'There is plenty of time for that fellow. A year from now we'll take him on.'"

But Black and Roxborough kept on their way. Louis met Massera and finished him in three rounds. Still, the experienced managers shook their heads.

A lucky break, they argued, and then when Louis was sent against the experienced Lee Ramage, who had never been off his feet, those cautious and careful advisers were positive that Black and Roxborough were trying to get Louis murdered.

Still, Louis went on fighting, and in his 13th professional bout met Patsy Perroni, as wise a fighter as there is in the ring. Louis went on winning, and when he stopped Hans Birkie in his next essay they just about voted Louis a wonder, even while admitting that such fighters as he was dumping would have been set aside for future consideration had he been under their care.

It's no wonder that the boxing world in general has accepted Louis as one of those great fighters who come along once in a generation, regardless of the outcome of the Baer fight. He seems to embody all the fine qualities of the greatest fighters.

The confidence that he has built by his succession of victories, 23 straight, has upset old traditions of the ring, but still the old question, "Does the fighter make the manager or does the manager make the fighter?" remains unanswered.

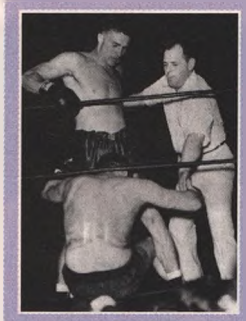
Joe Louis' record may not be duplicated for a long time, and no doubt the Pians, the Goldmans, the Gibsons, and those of that quality would never take the course that did Julian Black and John Roxborough to bring a fighter into the heavy money and the center of the spotlight of boxing popularity. ■

THE RING, November 1935

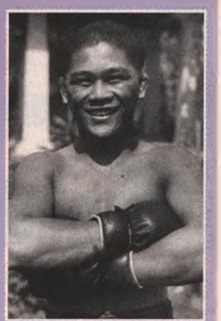
The Cover: Michigan's Wesley Ramey took a trip to Australia to face the best lightweights they had "Down Under" and returned to the U.S. as a contender. Ramey already owned a victory over lightweight champion Tony Canzoneri, scored in an over-the-weight bout in 1933. The anticipated next step for Ramey was a return bout with the title at stake.

Preparing For Battle: Joe Louis was believed to be one step away from fighting for the heavyweight title when he prepared to take on Max Baer in 1935. THE RING presented a special photo essay of both Louis (pictured having his hands wrapped by trainer Jack Blackburn) and Baer training for the showdown.

Science Over Slugging: Despite criticism that fighters in the mid-1930s had no defensive skills, champions like Barney Ross (pictured) proved otherwise. The welterweight champ employed the fine arts of ducking, feinting, and sidestepping to avoid the sluggers of the day. Ross' defensive ability was often compared to that of the great Benny Leonard.



Man Of Steele: Freddie Steele, a hard-hitting middleweight from Tacoma, Washington, established himself by knocking down former middleweight champ Vince Dundee 10 times en route to a third-round stoppage. Steele had survived a flaming car wreck, a kidney ailment that jeopardized his career, and managerial trouble to rise to the top of the middleweight pack.



Looking For A Few Good Little Men: With Joe Louis knocking out opponent after opponent, the call went out for the flyweight, bantamweight, or featherweight divisions to produce punchers like legends Pancho Villa (pictured) or Jimmy Wilde. Not only did the smaller weights lack wallop at the time, but they also lacked the color that champs like Villa and Wilde provided.

Come Out Writing

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

JONES-TARVER REACTION

When Roy Jones set foot inside the Mandalay Bay Events Center on the night of November 8, he appeared drawn and drained, his weary eyes betraying a confident smile. It would prove to be an ominous sign, as a severely dehydrated Jones would later turn in the worst performance of his career, narrowly outpointing Antonio Tarver for an unpopular majority decision victory.

I personally feel that things would have turned out differently if Jones had gradually trimmed himself down over the course of a few months, rather than going through extremes to shed weight at the last minute. But others are seemingly willing to write Jones off.

"It's over," declared Chris Byrd. "He's not sizzling anymore." Moreover, Floyd Mayweather Sr. proclaimed his son, "Pretty Boy Floyd," the new pound-for-pound king. I, however, believe Roy's performance was an anomaly, and isn't in any way indicative of a decline in skills. If Jones and Tarver have a rematch, I predict Jones will leave nothing to chance during his preparation, and once again prove that he's the best fighter of his era.

SCOTT MIERZWIAK
Toledo, OH

I couldn't believe what I was watching when Roy Jones was being outboxed and outpunched by Antonio Tarver. But the biggest shock of the night came when the decision was announced that gave Jones the verdict. Even Roy's mother wouldn't have given him the nod. It was a total disgrace, and I feel sorry for Tarver, who fought the perfect fight to beat the supposedly unbeatable Jones.

Will there be a rematch? No way! Jones will prefer to fight an over-the-hill and totally shot Mike Tyson and cement his legacy. But true boxing fans won't forget that Jones really lost to Tarver.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON
London, England

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Antonio Tarver has Roy Jones covering up during their light heavyweight title fight that Jones won via controversial majority decision. The fight generated quite a lot of reader commentary, including those of Scott Mierzwiak and Richard Whittington, who have different perspectives on the intriguing contest.

JUDGING JUDGES

For over 20 years I have subscribed to THE RING because of what I considered unbiased reporting and a commitment to bettering the sport. While I think the campaign to name one champion per weight class is a step in the right direction, I think a review of the judging system is a more dire need.

At one time, hearing "the fix is in" led one to believe a fighter was taking a dive. With scoring as it is, it now seems to mean that the same result can be accomplished through judging. While the cause may be incompetence rather than malfeasance, the sport simply cannot continue to endure even perceived impropriety. As Nigel Collins mentions in his "Ringside" editorial the February 2004 issue, it is considered libel to accuse someone of breaking the law without any evidence. However, when judges' scorecards vary dramatically, I think some quality control is in order. I propose the following:

1) THE RING publish a scorecard on judges like they do periodically on referees.

2) THE RING publish the names of the judges prior to upcoming fights along with their current RING rating, especially pay-per-view events.

3) Judges cannot score any rounds even.

4) Judges must turn in their scores on a round-by-round basis, not just at the end of the fight. That way they could not change the score of a round once the next round begins.

While I certainly don't think these solutions are the cure-all, I do think they would go a long way in preventing boxing from becoming the next WWE, where all the match winners are predetermined.

RANDY COOK
Cherry Hill, NJ

[Editor's note: While THE RING agrees that judges have to be held accountable and will continue to criticize egregious scores, the lead time for a monthly publication is too long for us to comment on the judges of upcoming fights, as they are not usually announced until the week of the fight. Also, while THE RING believes judges should strive not to score rounds even, forbidding them to ever score an even round would be counterproductive, as there are some rounds in which an even distribution of points is warranted. Finally, in most jurisdictions, the judges already hand in their scorecards at the end of each round.]

LOSS OF RESPECT

After watching Manny Pacquiao destroy Marco Antonio Barrera, I think Barrera should change his nickname from "The Baby-Faced Assassin" to "The Crybaby." After being accidentally headbutted, Barrera looked at the referee, then at the doctor, and back again to see if one of them would stop the fight and end the punishment he was taking.

Hey, Barrera, this is boxing. You may get hurt. I also lost respect for Barrera for trying to headbutt Pacquiao on purpose and then trying to hit him while the referee was breaking them up. I hope Barrera does not fight anymore. No, wait. I hope he does and gets another beating from Pacquiao.

JAIME GUTIERREZ
South Gate, CA

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Did Marco Antonio Barrera try to punk out during his recent featherweight championship fight with Manny Pacquiao? That's what reader Jaime Gutierrez thinks after watching some of the tactics Barrera resorted to as it became clear that he could not beat Pacquiao.

McLARNIN MIX-UP

Robert Cassidy is not the first to wrongly record the birthplace of Jimmy McLarnin as "Inchacore, near Belfast, in Northern Ireland" ("Welter Champ Jimmy McLarnin: He Fought 10 Hall Of Famers And Beat Them All," THE RING EXTRA, January '04). While Inchicore (correct spelling) is actually a suburb of Dublin, that is not where McLarnin first saw the light of day. McLarnin's birth certificate, of which I have a copy, proves that he was born in Hillsborough, County Down, about 12 miles from Belfast, on December 19, 1907, which is a year later than shown in several record books. I hope this clears up the issue once and for all, although I doubt it.

PATRICK MYLER
Dublin, Ireland

THE RING's man in Dublin, Ireland, Patrick Myler, writes to correct a mistake about the birthplace of Jimmy McLarnin that appeared in a recent issue. Myler should know, as he has a copy of the former welterweight champ's birth certificate.

REMEMBERING YAQUI

I always wondered whatever became of Yaqui Lopez, and was glad to read that he's doing well. "THE RING Update" about Lopez in the February 2004 issue ("God Didn't Want Him To Be Champion") was good. However, the story said Lopez was stopped by Lonnie Bennett, but didn't give any details. I saw the fight, and Lopez was beating Bennett until he was cut by what appeared to be a deliberate headbutt. Otherwise, Bennett couldn't have defeated Lopez, who was the superior fighter of the two.

JIM WATT
Los Angeles, CA

MISSPENT MILLIONS

Shame on HBO for making a living legend like Arturo Gatti wait 42 professional bouts before giving him the big-money, multi-fight contract he has long deserved. It's bad enough that in their ego-driven quest to sew up the most talented fighters, the cable giant is willing to shovel out millions of dollars to bores such as Lummox Lewis, "Pretty Bore" Mayweather, and Roy "Screw You, Pay Me" Jones. But to pay Gatti less for his trilogy with Micky Ward than Jones made to phone it in against Antonio Tarver is a disgrace.

If HBO is serious about resurrecting boxing as a mainstream sport, it needs to pay for performances, not meaningless pound-for-pound status. I would rather watch Gatti and Ward fight 100 times than suffer through one Naseem Hamed comeback.

MIKE WATSON
Bethesda, MD ■

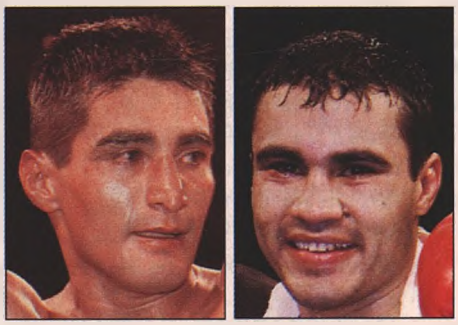
LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

IS JESUS "THE NEXT CHAVEZ"?

For almost a decade now, fight fans have been looking for "the next Chavez." But perhaps they've been looking in the wrong places, while overlooking the obvious: a guy named Chavez. Granted, it's near impossible that junior lightweight beltholder **Jesus Chavez** could ever approach the legendary heights that **Julio Cesar Chavez** reached, but he does have a chance to establish himself as the number-one Mexican-born fighter in the world when he faces the current leading "next Chavez" candidate, the favored **Erik Morales**, on February 28 on HBO.

"I don't like to think in those terms," said Chavez in early-December, about a month before heading off to training camp. "It's not about who's the best Mexican fighter in the world or anything like that. Just beating Erik Morales is my goal. This is an important fight for me because Erik is such a well-known fighter, and he's a hot fighter right now."



Morales-Chavez: Potential all-action Mexican brawl

Chavez is a fairly hot fighter himself, coming off a 2003 campaign in which he avenged one of his two career defeats with a sixth-round kayo of **Carlos Gerena**, then won the WBC 130-pound belt (which just happens to be the first major title Julio Cesar Chavez ever held) with a unanimous decision over **Sirimongkol Singmanassak**. He's on a five-fight win streak since losing to the excellent **Floyd Mayweather** in '01, and "El Matador" believes Morales' style will suit him far better than Mayweather's did.

"Floyd Mayweather has a lot better defense than Morales does," Chavez noted. "Erik's a Mexican fighter with a lot of heart, so even though he can box well, he's going to want to fight with me too. And I'm definitely going to want to be aggressive and make a fight of it. I can't promise that it's going to turn into a slugfest, but I'm at least going to do my best to make it one."

PROSPECTS ON PARADE

For Main Events' quartet of prized Latino prospects, **Rocky Juarez**, **Juan Diaz**, **Francisco "Panchito" Bojado**, and **Kermit Cintron**, not only have their first fights of 2004 been scheduled, but their second bouts of the year are coming into view as well. After Showtime failed to renew its contracts with Juarez, Diaz, and Bojado in early-December, the three youngsters became network free agents, and along with Cintron, all will make their HBO debuts in early-'04, followed by returns to NBC in the spring.

Up first will be Bojado, fighting in the co-feature to the **Arturo Gatti-Gianluca Branco** fight in Atlantic City on January 24. The other three are all expected to fight on the televised undercard of the **Fernando Vargas-Javier Castillejo** HBO Pay-Per-View on February 21 at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. The opponents were all up in the air as we went to press, but based on some of the names Main Events matchmaker **Carl Moretti** dropped to THE RING as possibilities (**Jesse James Leija** for Bojado, **Wayne McCullough** for Juarez, **Julio Diaz** for Diaz, etc.), these are not going to be walkovers. And with five NBC dates reserved for April/May '04, Moretti expects each of these four up-and-comers to headline one of those Saturday afternoon broadcasts.

While they're all being maneuvered into title shots much more slowly than the prospects who turned pro after the '96 Olympics, risks are still being taken in the matchmaking. And that's exactly how Moretti always intended to move with this crew.

"You make the real money defending the title, not challenging for it, so the goal all along has been for these guys to *win* titles, not just fight for them," Moretti said. "I think they're all on their way to being world champions. And they should all be as ready as they're going to be by the end of 2004."

LISTEN UP

If the Canada-born Gatti gets by Branco, his next fight will most likely be against Canada-based Romanian **Leonard Dorin** in Montreal. The Molson Centre, which seats more than 20,000, is being considered, but because it's believed that this blood-and-guts battle could possibly draw up to 40,000 fans in Montreal, Olympic Stadium is also a possibility. ■

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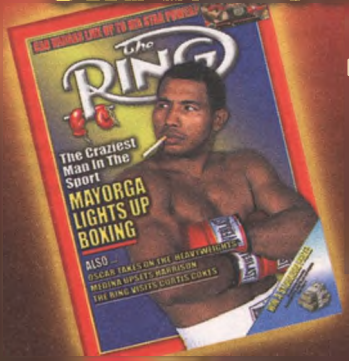

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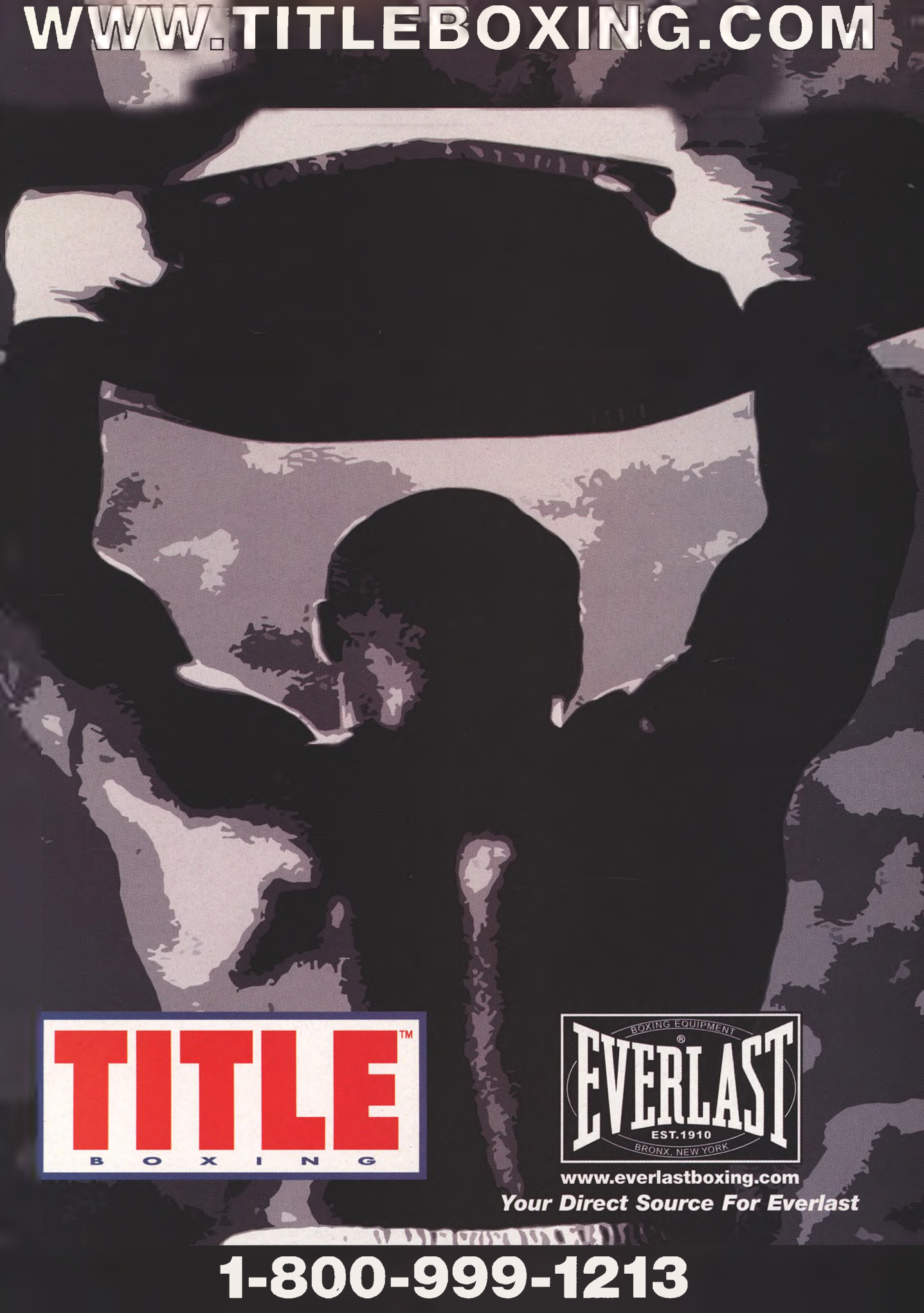
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